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ABSTRACT

This report provides statistical data on the educational status of Hispanic Americans. Summaries are provided of educational status, attainment, and literacy at various points in the educational pipeline. Information about elementary and secondary school teachers is also included. Statistical data were drawn primarily from recent reports of the National Center for Education Statistics and the United States Bureau of the Census. The following summary findings are reported: (1) Hispanics are the most undereducated segment of the population; (2) Hispanics represent a growing segment of the school-age population; (3) Hispanic students face serious difficulties; (4) achievement test scores of Hispanics and Blacks remain lower than those of Whites, and in some cases the gap is widening; (5) Hispanic eighth-graders have lower educational expectations than Blacks or Whites; (6) Hispanics are unlikely to have Hispanic teachers who can serve as mentors; (7) Hispanics continue to be at risk of academic failure and dropping out; (8) Hispanics continue to have the highest dropout rate of any group; (9) Hispanics continue to have the lowest high school completion rates of any group, and the gap between Hispanics and both Blacks and Whites is continuing to grow; (10) Hispanic enrollment in higher education is low and Hispanic students tend to enroll in schools not offering advanced degrees; (11) compared to Blacks and Whites, Hispanics rely more heavily on student loans and less on grants to finance postsecondary education; and (12) Hispanic illiteracy rates are much higher than those of Blacks or Whites. Statistical data are presented in 29 tables and 45 graphs. There are 50 reference notes. (FMW)

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HISPANIC EDUCATION:

A Statistical Portrait

1990

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THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LA RAZA (NCLR)

The National Council of La Raza (NCLR), one of the largest national Hispanic organizations, exists to improve life opportunities for the more than 20 million Americans of Hispanic descent. In addition to its Washington, D.C. headquarters, the Council maintains field offices in Los Angeles, California, Phoenix, Arizona and McAllen, Texas. The Council has four missions: applied research, policy analysis and advocacy on behalf of all Hispanic Americans; technical assistance and capacity-building support to Hispanic community-based organizations, Hispanic entrepreneurs and elected and appointed officials in communities with large Hispanic populations; public information activities designed to inform Hispanic communities and the broader American public about Hispanic status, needs and concerns; and special catalytic projects. NCLR serves as an umbrella for more than 120 affiliated Hispanic community-based organizations which together serving 32 states and the District of Columbia and reach more than one million Hispanics annually.

HISPANIC EDUCATION: A STATISTICAL PORTRAIT 1990

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hispanics are the most undereducated major segment of the U.S. population. Hispanic educational attainment has increased since 1970, but the gap between Hispanics and non-Hispanics continues to widen. Compared to Blacks and Whites, Hispanics enter school later, leave school earlier, and are less likely to complete high school, enter or complete college.

Hispanics represent a growing segment of the school-age population. The Hispanic population has grown about five times as fast as the non-Hispanic population since 1980 and is the youngest major U.S. group, and so the Hispanic school-aged population is increasing rapidly. Public school enrollment is projected to rise to almost 44 million in 2000, and nearly all the increase will be in minority -- especially Hispanic -- enrollment.

While in school, Hispanics face serious difficulties. Hispanic students have far higher rates of enrollment below grade levels than Whites, and by the time they reach the age of 13, higher rates than Blacks as well -- and there has been no overall improvement in the level of below-grade Hispanic enrollment in the past several years. Further, Hispanic student suspensions in several states with large Hispanic enrollments are increasing, while suspension rates for Whites are decreasing substantially. The number of Hispanic student suspensions in California, for example, has increased by 36%, up from 60,743 in 1980, to 82,893 in 1986. Also, in most states, the rate of bilingual education services for Hispanics has been decreasing in recent years, at a time when the demand for services has been increasing -- due to increased Hispanic enrollment and an increased number of limited-English-proficient (LEP) children. For example, bilingual education service rates for Hispanic students in Florida declined from 26.5% in 1980 to 17.5% in 1986. A high proportion of LEP Hispanic 8th grade students (31.8%) have repeated at least one grade, compared to non-LEP Hispanics (21.9%).

Academic achievement scores for Hispanics and Blacks remain lower than those of White students, and in some cases the gap is widening. As assessed by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, minorities appear to be making gains in certain test scores but not in others. Three out of four Hispanic 8th graders cannot pass a test of simple mathematical operations using decimals or fractions. In all Hispanic subgroups, 8th graders are far more likely to score below the basic level than at the advanced level in math. Hispanic students are the least likely of any group of 8th graders to take advanced math courses and the most likely to take remedial math. In addition, they more often report taking no science courses at all (8.3%) than do either Blacks (6.0%) or Whites (3.2%).

Hispanic 8th graders have lower educational expectations than Black or White students; they are less sure of graduating from high school than any other group, and have the lowest expectation of finishing college. Less than one-quarter of Hispanic 8th graders (22.5%) plan to enter a college-preparatory, academic high school program, compared with 30.9% of White, 24.7% of Black, and 37.1% of Asian and Pacific Islander students. Cubans

are more likely than other Hispanic 8th graders to have plans for enrolling in a college preparatory program.

Hispanic students are unlikely to have Hispanic teachers that can act as mentors. While Hispanics make up nearly 10% of the K-12 population, Hispanic teachers represent only 2.9% of public- and 2.8% of private-school teachers in the country. Hispanics teaching in public schools are more likely to have only a Bachelor's degree (61%) than are non-Hispanic teachers (52%); total earned income and base salaries for Hispanic teachers are, in general, lower than for non-Hispanic teachers.

Hispanic students continue to stand "at-risk" of failure and dropping out of school. While there are many reasons why students leave school without a high school diploma, the factors most consistently linked to dropping out have to do with family socioeconomic status and other aspects of family background. Studies suggest that a combination of several factors commonly associated with dropping out -- including race/ethnicity, living in a poor household or single-parent family, low parental education or income, limited English proficiency, having a brother or sister who dropped out of high school, and being at home alone without an adult for a long period of time on weekdays -- put many Hispanic students at high risk. Students with two or more of these "risk factors" are twice as likely as those with no risk factors to be in the lowest grade and test score distributions and six times as likely to say that they do not expect to graduate from high school. Hispanic students have the highest incidence of a single risk factor of *all* groups and are almost three times more likely than White students to have two or more risk factors.

Regardless of the measure used, Hispanics continue to have the highest school dropout rates of any major group. About 43% of Hispanics aged 19 years old and over are not enrolled in high school and have no high school diploma. Hispanic females tend to drop out slightly earlier than Hispanic males, but have slightly lower overall dropout rates -- 42.3% for males and 41.1% for females. By age 16-17, almost one in five Hispanics (19.5%) has left school without a diploma, compared to less than one in 16 Blacks (6.0%) and one in 15 Whites (7.1%). The largest group of Hispanic students (34% of males and 32% of females) reported leaving school because of poor grades.

Hispanics continue to have the lowest high school completion rates of any major population group, and the gap between Hispanics and other Americans, both Black and White, continues to grow. As of 1989, 50.9% of Hispanics 25 and over are high school graduates, compared to 76.9% of the general population. Among 18-24 year-olds, just 55% of Hispanics have completed high school, compared to 75% of Blacks and 82% of Whites. Less than half of Hispanics 35 years old and over (45%) have completed four or more years of high school, compared to three-fourths (75%) of non-Hispanics. Of all Hispanic subgroups, Mexican Americans have the lowest levels of educational attainment, and Cubans the highest. Only 50% of the young adult Mexican American population has completed four or more years of high school, compared to 70% of Central and South Americans, 76% of Puerto Ricans, 84% of Cubans, and 77% of Other Hispanics.

Hispanic higher education enrollment is low and Hispanic students tend to enroll at two-year colleges and other schools not offering advanced degrees: In 1986, about 78% of students enrolled in the nation's colleges were White, 9% were Black, 7% were Hispanic, 5% were Asian, and 1% were Native American. These percentages varied considerably by type of institution. In 1988, Hispanic students accounted for 7.9% of all students enrolled in two-year colleges, but only 3.6% of those enrolled in four-year institutions. Only 10% of Hispanics 25 years old and over have completed four or more years of college, compared to 21% of non-Hispanics.

Compared to Whites and Blacks, Hispanic students rely more heavily on student loans and less on grants in financing their postsecondary education. While Hispanic families have incomes far below those of Whites, Hispanic students appear to have the largest average loan amounts outstanding for all groups of students.

Illiteracy rates are much higher for Hispanics than for Blacks or Whites. By the traditional measure of literacy -- the completion of less than five years of schooling -- 11.9% of Hispanics 25 and over could be considered illiterate as of 1987, compared to 1.8% of the total non-Hispanic population. When functional measures of literacy are used, the Hispanic illiteracy rate may be over 50%. One national study found that 56% of Hispanic adults are functionally illiterate, compared to 44% of Blacks and 16% of Whites.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This statistical analysis is a preliminary edition of a major report on Hispanic educational status by the Policy Analysis Center of the National Council of La Raza (NCLR).

The educational gap between Hispanics and non-Hispanics continues to widen. National data indicate that Hispanics are slipping through the cracks of the educational pipeline at disproportionate rates. Almost half drop out of school before high school graduation, too few enter --- and even fewer complete -- college, and over half of Hispanic adults may be functionally illiterate, making Hispanics the most undereducated major subgroup in the country. Although Hispanics are making progress in their levels of educational attainment, they still complete considerably fewer years of school than either Blacks or Whites -- and the gap between Hispanic and non-Hispanic educational attainment continues to widen.

Because education is such a critical issue for the Hispanic community, education-related research, policy analysis and demonstration projects have been a high priority for the National Council of La Raza since its inception -- and the top priority for over a decade. ***Hispanic Education: A Statistical Portrait 1990*** -- the third in a continuing series of major reports on the educational status of Hispanics from the NCLR Policy Analysis Center -- is designed to provide Hispanic and mainstream community-based organizations, leaders, and policy makers with a "snapshot" or "portrait" of the educational status of Hispanics. It uses the most recent available and reliable data on Hispanic educational attainment from such sources as the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics and the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

The report is designed to provide educational status data in a usable and practical format and context. Because educational outcomes for Hispanics are greatly affected by their social and economic background, a demographic overview helps explain some of the personal and family status factors affecting undereducation in the Hispanic community. Snapshot summaries are provided of the educational status, attainment, and literacy of Hispanics at various points in the educational pipeline -- grades K-12, postsecondary education, young adults and adults -- along with information about the teachers who teach in public and private elementary and secondary schools.

Data on Hispanic education are limited. Hispanic subgroup data are difficult to find: national, and especially state and local, agencies do not always collect, analyze, publish or disseminate *any* data by Hispanic subgroup. Hispanics are not a homogenous population -- Hispanic subgroups are quite varied in their educational experiences and needs. It is extremely important that a basic understanding of these differences be taken into consideration by educational policy makers and practitioners when developing programs to meet the specific educational needs of Hispanics in any particular region of the country; a "quick fix" or band-aid solution ignoring these differences will not suffice.

A great deal of new information, not available in past years, was incorporated into this revised analysis by NCLR. Data in this report are drawn from several different major sources, including the following:

* A new longitudinal survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), called the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), which provides detailed information about Hispanic 8th graders, by Hispanic subgroup -- Mexican/Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban and Other Hispanic student populations.

* The Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), a new survey providing information on teachers and schools, including a special sample on bilingual education and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) teachers.

* National Center for Research in Vocational Education information on course-taking patterns and vocational education program involvement by Hispanic students, which provides comparisons with non-Hispanic White and Black students enrolled in vocational education programs.

* Reports issued in 1988 by the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) on national levels of proficiency in Math, Science, Writing, and Reading.

* The Elementary and Secondary School Civil Rights Survey by the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, which provide trend data on Hispanic enrollment, suspension rates, and bilingual services.

* Data from various Current Population Surveys and Reports of the U.S Bureau of the Census, including the most recently released version of ***The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1989***.

The Hispanic population is growing five times as fast as the non-Hispanic population. Early in the 21st century Hispanics will be the largest ethnic minority in the United States. Moreover, the Hispanic school-age population is growing rapidly, and Hispanics -- now about 10% of total K-12 public-school enrollment -- will constitute nearly one-third of the students in our nation's classrooms by the year 2000.

These demographic changes are occurring at time when the nation's -- and the world's -- technology is continuously advancing, requiring increased levels of literacy, analytical and technical skills for gainful employment. However, Hispanics continue to suffer from an educational crisis of major proportions. Reversing the trend of Hispanic education is a national -- not just an Hispanic -- imperative. Federal, state, and local policy makers, teachers, school administrators, business and corporate representatives, community

activists and organizational representatives, and parents must actively work together to assure effective schooling for Hispanic children, especially those who are not being equitably or effectively served within the current structure. Like other Americans, Hispanics deserve both educational equity and excellence -- and they are not being well served by the current educational system.

Failure to improve educational access, opportunities, and outcomes for Hispanic children now will have enormous long-term costs to the individual, family, community, and society. Individuals will be consigned to lives of low skills, minimal employment opportunities, limited participating in mainstream society, and continued poverty. Employers will lose potential productivity and international competitiveness. And society as a whole will pay the price of wasted human resources in increasing social welfare costs.

Assessing the poor educational status of Hispanics and understanding its implications are an essential foundation for developing appropriate programs that will address the unique educational needs of Hispanics and of specific Hispanic subgroups. This publication is intended as a quick and easy reference for information on the educational status of Hispanics in the U.S. This advance conference edition of the report provides only a statistical portrait of Hispanic education; a final, expanded post-conference version, including policy implications and recommendations for policies and programs to improve Hispanic educational outcomes, will be available from NCLR in September.

Hispanic Education: A Statistical Portrait 1990 is a preliminary report; therefore, NCLR education component staff welcome comments or suggestions about any aspect of the report.

CHAPTER 2. DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

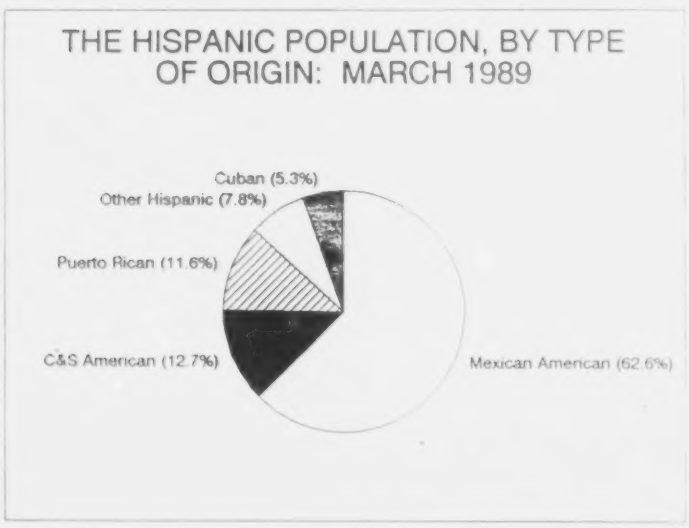
A. Introduction

The educational status of Hispanics is best understood in the context of the overall demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the Hispanic population. Data from the March 1989 Current Population Survey, published in May 1990 by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, provide perhaps the most up-to-date summary available of the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Hispanics in the United States. This chapter provides a brief statistical description of the Hispanic community using those data, including breakdowns for the major Hispanic subgroups. Because that report provides comparative data only for Hispanics, non-Hispanics, and the total population, this chapter does not include comparisons between Hispanics, Blacks, and Whites.

B. Population Size and Location

About one in 12 Americans is Hispanic. According to 1989 Census Bureau figures, the Hispanic population is about 20.1 million, out of a total U.S. population of about 243.7 million; these figures exclude the approximately 3.5 million residents of Puerto Rico.

FIGURE 2.1



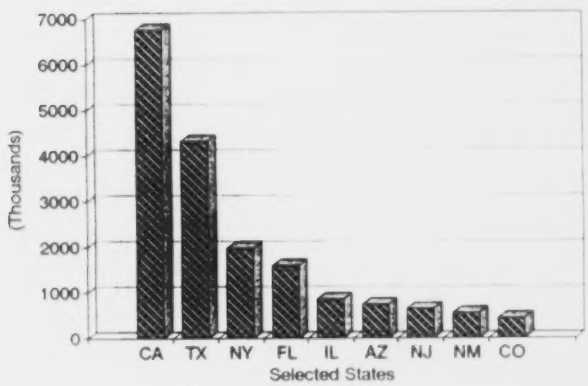
A majority of U.S. Hispanics are Mexican Americans; 12.6 million Hispanics (62.6%) identify themselves as Mexican American, 2.3 million (11.6%) as Puerto Rican, 1.1 million (5.3%) as Cuban, 2.5 million (12.7%) as Central and South American, and 1.6 million (7.8%) as of other Hispanic origin (See Figure 2.1).

The Hispanic population has grown about five times as fast as the non-Hispanic population since 1980. While the total U.S. population grew by 9.5% and the non-Hispanic population by 7.5% during those years, the Hispanic population increased by 38.9%. Immigration has contributed about half this growth, compared with 21% of the growth of the non-Hispanic population.

Hispanics live in every state, but have become more geographically concentrated during the 1980s. Slightly more than 55% of all Hispanics live in California and Texas, and

FIGURE 2.2

HISPANIC POPULATION FOR SELECTED STATES: MARCH 1989



nearly 90% live in these states plus New York, Florida, Illinois, Arizona, New Jersey, New Mexico, and Colorado. These same nine states accounted for slightly more than 80% of all Hispanics in 1980. (See Figures 2.2 and 2.3).

Hispanics comprise more than one-fifth of the population of four states: New Mexico (36.7%), Texas (25.8%), California (24.3%), and Arizona (20.8%). Nationally, Hispanics represent 8.2% of the total U.S. population (See Figure 2.3).

FIGURE 2.3
HISPANIC POPULATION OF SELECTED STATES
MARCH 1989

	Hispanic Population (Thousands)	% of Total Hispanic Pop.	Hispanics as % of State Total
California	6,762	33.7	24.3
Texas	4,313	21.5	25.8
New York	1,982	9.9	11.2
Florida	1,586	7.9	12.7
Illinois	855	4.3	7.5
Arizona	725	3.6	20.8
New Jersey	638	3.2	8.4
New Mexico	549	2.7	36.7
Colorado	421	2.1	13.0
All Other States	2,245	11.1	---
Total U. S.	20,076	100.0	8.2

Source: Bureau of the Census, "The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1989," Series P-20, No. 444, March 1990, p.3.

Hispanics are a highly urbanized population. More than nine-tenths (92.0%) of Hispanics live in urban areas, compared to less than three-fourths (73.4%) of non-Hispanics. More than 95% of Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Central and South Americans live in urban areas, compared to about 91% of Mexican Americans.

C. *Age*

Hispanics are the youngest major U. S. subpopulation, with a median age of 25.9 years, more than seven years below that of the non-Hispanic population (33.2 years.) More than two-thirds (67.7%) of the Hispanic population is under 35 years old, compared with a little more than half (53.2%) of the non-Hispanic population. Only one in 20 Hispanics (5.0%) is 65 or older, compared with one in eight non-Hispanics (12.5%). Well over one-fourth (27.9%) of Hispanics are of school age (5-19), compared with about one-fifth (21.0%) of non-Hispanics (See Figure 2.4).

Age distributions vary substantially among Hispanics; Mexican Americans are the youngest subgroup, with a median age of 23.6 years, and Cubans are by far the oldest, with a median age of 41.4 (See Figure 2.5)

FIGURE 2.4

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL, HISPANIC, AND NON-HISPANIC U.S. POPULATION: 1989

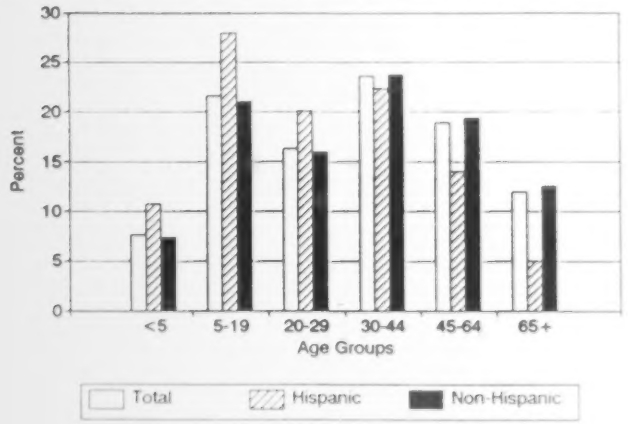
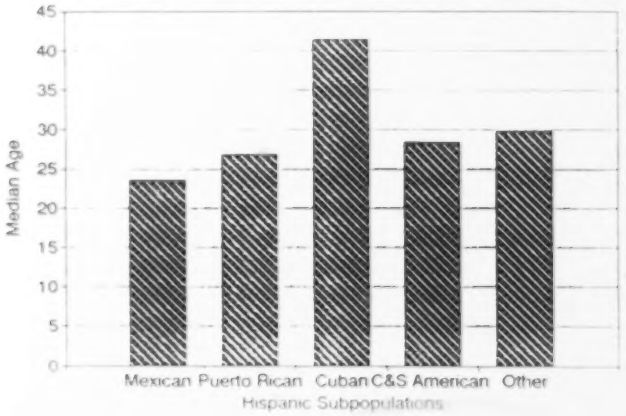


FIGURE 2.5

MEDIAN AGE OF HISPANIC SUBPOPULATIONS: MARCH 1989



D. *Family Status and Size*

Hispanics are somewhat less likely than non-Hispanics to live in married-couple families, and more likely to live in female-headed households. Nearly one-fourth (23.1%) of Hispanics live in female-headed families, compared with less than one-sixth (16.0%) of non-Hispanics. About seven in ten Hispanic families include married couples, compared with about eight in ten non-Hispanic families (See Figure 2.6).

There are major subgroup differences. Cubans (77.3%) and Mexican Americans (74.2%) have the highest proportion of married couple families, and Puerto Ricans (56.6%) the lowest. Nearly two in five Puerto Rican families (39.6%) are female-headed, compared with less than one in five Cuban (17.7%) and Mexican American (19.0%) families.

Hispanics tend to have larger families than non-Hispanics. About half of all Hispanic families include four or more members, compared with one-third of non-Hispanic families. Mean family size for Hispanics families is 3.75 persons, compared with 3.11 for non-Hispanics. As Figure 2.7 shows, Cubans have a mean family size (2.91) smaller than that of non-Hispanics, while Mexican Americans have the largest families, with a mean family size of 4.10. Nearly one-sixth of Mexican-American families include six or more members.

FIGURE 2.6

TYPE AND FAMILY SIZE FOR U.S. TOTAL, HISPANIC, AND NON-HISPANIC POPULATIONS

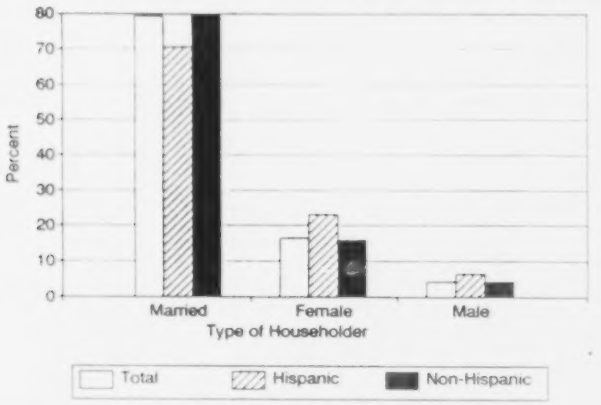
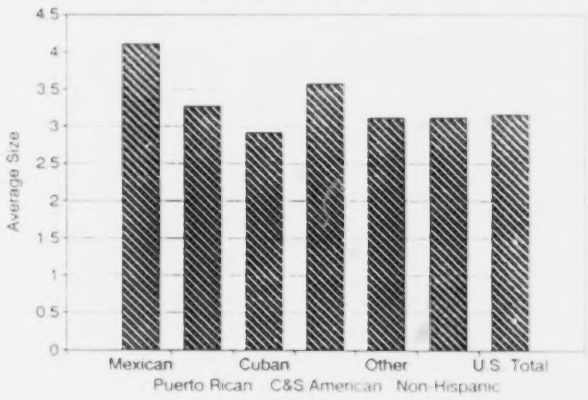


FIGURE 2.7

MEAN FAMILY SIZE BY HISPANIC SUBGROUP AND NON-HISPANIC POPULATION: 1989



Hispanics tend to marry Hispanics, and also to marry within their own subgroup. More than four out of five Hispanic husbands (85%) and Hispanic wives (82%) in married-couple families have Hispanic spouses. Those who marry outside their specific subgroup are more likely to be married to non-Hispanics than to members of a different Hispanic subgroup.

E. Employment

Hispanics have a much higher unemployment rate than non-Hispanics, even though they are more likely than the general population to be in the work force. The Hispanic unemployment rate (7.8%) is 50% above the rate for non-Hispanics (5.2%). Hispanic males have a very high labor force participation rate; 80.1% of Hispanic males 16 and over are working or looking for work, compared to 74.4% of non-Hispanics. Among

Hispanics, Central and South American males (85.4%) and Mexican American males (82.2%) have the highest labor force participation rates, and Puerto Rican males (69.6%) the lowest.

Hispanic women remain less likely than non-Hispanic women to be in the labor force; 57.0% of non-Hispanic women are working or seeking work, compared with 52.4% of Hispanics. With a 61.7% labor force participation rate, Cuban women are more likely than other Hispanic women or non-Hispanic women to be members of the work force, while Puerto Rican women have the lowest labor force participation rate at 41.7%

Among the employed, Hispanics are far less likely than non-Hispanics to have managerial and professional jobs. Hispanic men are most likely to be employed in operator, fabricator, and laborer occupations, while managerial and professional occupations are the leading occupational group for non-Hispanic men. Both Hispanic and non-Hispanic women are more likely to be in technical, sales, and administrative support occupations than in any other occupational group. Hispanic women are more likely than non-Hispanic women to be employed in service occupations, while non-Hispanic women are nearly twice as likely as Hispanic women to be in managerial or professional occupations (See Figure 2.8).

FIGURE 2.8
OCCUPATIONS FOR TOTAL POPULATION, HISPANICS AND NON-HISPANICS AGES 16 AND OLDER BY SEX, MARCH 1989
(PERCENT)

OCCUPATION	PERCENT OF POPULATION IN OCCUPATIONAL GROUP					
	Total Population		Total Hispanic		Total Non-Hispanic	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Managerial and Professional	26.4	26.3	12.1	14.9	27.6	27.0
Tech., Sales, Admin. Support	19.5	44.1	14.5	38.4	19.9	44.5
Service Occupations	9.7	17.5	17.7	24.1	9.0	17.1
Farming, Forestry, Fishing	4.0	0.9	7.7	1.4	3.7	0.9
Precision, Production, Craft & Repair	19.4	2.3	19.3	3.1	19.5	2.2
Operators, Fabricators, Laborers	21.0	8.9	28.6	18.2	20.3	8.3

Source: Bureau of the Census, "The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1989," Series P-20, No. 444, March 1990, p. 10.

Employment patterns vary considerably among Hispanic subgroups, with Cuban men having the highest and Mexican American men the lowest representation in managerial and professional occupations. Cuban men are the only Hispanic subgroup with more than 50% employed in white-collar jobs (managerial and professional or technical, sales, and administrative support). Cuban men are three times as likely as Mexican American men to be in managerial and professional occupations; more than one-fourth (25.2%) of Cuban men and just one-twelfth (8.7%) of Mexican American men hold such jobs. About one in ten Puerto Ricans (10.6%), and more than one in six Central and South Americans (18.7%) and other Hispanics (17.4%) hold managerial and professional jobs. The most common occupational category for men of all Hispanic subgroups except Cubans is operators, fabricators, and laborers.

Hispanic women of all subgroups -- like non-Hispanic women -- are most likely to work in technical, sales, and administrative support positions, which account for between one-third and one-half of women in each subgroup. About one-fifth of Cuban (22.3%), Puerto Rican (20.0%), and other Hispanic women (19.3%) hold managerial and professional jobs, compared to about one-eighth of Mexican American (12.8%) and Central and South American women (13.4%).

F. Income and Poverty

Hispanic families have a median income only two-thirds as high as non-Hispanic families: $21,769 for Hispanics and $33,142 for non-Hispanics. Hispanic families are twice as likely as non-Hispanics to have incomes below $10,000; about one in five Hispanic families and one in ten non-Hispanic families has an annual income below $10,000 (See Figure 2.9).

FIGURE 2.9
INCOMES OF TOTAL U.S.,
HISPANIC AND NON-HISPANIC FAMILIES, 1988

FAMILY INCOME	PERCENT OF POPULATION		
	Total Population	Total Hispanic	Total Non-Hispanic
Less then $10,000	10.8	20.3	10.0
$10,000 to $24,999	26.6	35.8	25.9
$25,000 to $49,999	36.9	32.0	37.3
$50,000 or more	25.7	11.9	26.8
Below Poverty Level	10.4	23.7	9.4
Median Income ($)	32,191	21,769	33,142

Source: Bureau of the Census, "The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1989," Series P-20, No. 444, March 1990, p. 16.

Hispanic families are two and a half times as likely as non-Hispanics to live in poverty. Almost one in four Hispanic families (23.7%) lives below the poverty level, compared with less than one in ten non-Hispanic families (9.4%).

Among Hispanics, Puerto Rican families fare worst economically. Puerto Rican families have the lowest median family income ($18,932), the highest proportion of families with incomes below $10,000 (29.1%), and the highest poverty rate (30.8%). Mexican Americans have the second lowest median family income ($21,025), second highest poverty rate (24.9%), and lowest proportion of families with incomes of $50,000 or more (9.9%). Cuban families fare best among Hispanic subgroups, but have lower median family incomes and higher poverty levels than non-Hispanics. Among Cubans, median family income is $26,858, the poverty rate is 16.9%, and 24.5% of families have incomes of $50,000 or more (See Figure 2.10).

FIGURE 2.10
INCOME OF HISPANIC FAMILIES BY SUBGROUP, MARCH 1989
(PERCENT)

FAMILY INCOME	PERCENT OF POPULATION				
	Mexican Origin	Puerto Rican	Cuban Origin	Cent.& South Amer. Orig.	Other Hisp.
Less then $10,000	19.9	29.1	16.7	14.5	21.3
$10,000 to 24,999	37.5	33.0	30.2	37.0	30.9
$25,000 to 49,999	32.7	27.1	28.5	31.9	37.2
$50,000 or more	9.9	10.7	24.5	16.7	10.6
Percent Below Poverty Level	24.9	30.8	16.9	16.6	20.6
Median Income ($)	21,025	18,932	26,858	24,322	23,666

Source: Bureau of the Census, "The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1989," Series P-20, No. 444, March 1990, pp. 16-17.

Female-headed Hispanic families have far higher poverty rates than other Hispanic families. Almost half (49.1%) of Hispanic female-headed families are poor by federal standards, compared to about one-fourth (23.7%) of all Hispanic families, and about one-third (31.7) of non-Hispanic female-headed households. The poverty rate among female-headed Hispanic households is 58.3% for Puerto Ricans and 50.2% for Mexican Americans.

All Hispanic families are far more likely than non-Hispanic families to be poor, but poverty rates are highest among Puerto Ricans and among female-headed Hispanic families.

G. Implications

The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Hispanics provide an important "context" for understanding Hispanic educational status. Though there are significant subgroup differences, Hispanics overall are a young, rapidly growing, geographically concentrated, and highly urbanized population. On the average, Hispanics have larger families, more female-headed families, lower incomes, and higher poverty rates than non-Hispanics. Hispanic men have a higher labor force participation rate than non-Hispanic men, while Hispanic women are somewhat less likely to be working or seeking work than non-Hispanic women. All these characteristics have important implications for Hispanic educational opportunities, experiences, and outcomes.

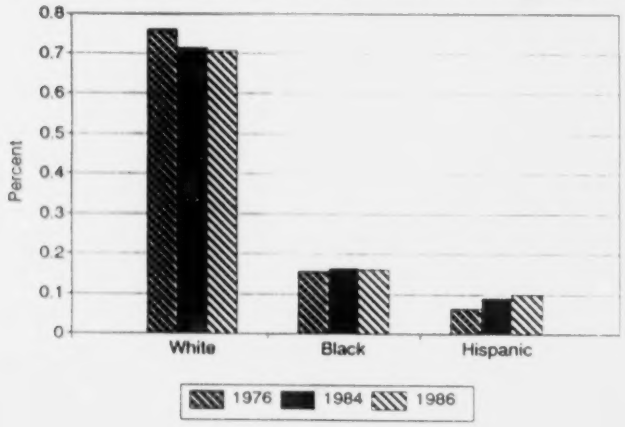
CHAPTER 3. SNAPSHOT: HISPANIC STUDENTS -- K-12

A. School Enrollment

The overall U.S. Hispanic population continues to increase at approximately five times the rate of the general population, and so the Hispanic school-aged population continues to grow. The most recent detailed enrollment figures which separately identify Hispanics and White and Black non-Hispanics are for 1986, as shown in Figure 3.1 below.[1] Hispanics as a proportion of total enrollment increased from about one in 16 in 1976 to almost one in ten in 1986, while White student enrollment declined from 76% to 70% of total enrollment during the same period.[2] Of the 41.4 million children attending public schools in the fall of 1988, 10.5% or 4.3 million were Hispanic, up from 8.8% or 3.6 million in the fall of 1984 (See Figure 3.2).[3]

FIGURE 3.1

TRENDS IN PROPORTION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY RACE/ETHNIC GROUP



Hispanic students continue to make up a high proportion of the student population in the elementary grades while declining in the upper grades, as shown in Figure 3.2. This can be explained by three interrelated factors: Hispanics continue to have a higher birth rate, a lower median age, and a higher dropout rate than any other population group. The figure does not separate out White and Black non-Hispanics, but does indicate the percentage of students who are Hispanic, overall and by grade.

A new longitudinal survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), called the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), provides detailed information about Hispanic 8th graders.[4]

Hispanics make up 10.4% of the approximately three million students enrolled in 8th grade across the U.S., according to NELS:88. About 71.6% of these students are White non-Hispanic, 13.2% Black non-Hispanic, 3.5% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 1.3% American Indian or Alaskan Native. Within the diverse Hispanic 8th grade student population, students report the following subgroup identification: 61.8% consider themselves Mexican, Mexican-American, or Chicano; 23.2% other Hispanic; 11.2% Puerto Rican; and 3.8% Cuban.

FIGURE 3.2
ENROLLMENT IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL BY RACE/ETHNICITY, MARCH 1988*

	Grades 1-4	Grades 5-8	Grades 9-10	Grades 11-12	All
NUMBER (Thousands)					
Total Students	14826	13423	6570	6586	41405
White	11813	10746	5218	5290	33067
Black	2398	2144	1086	1003	6631
Hispanic	1743	1433	678	488	4342
PERCENT					
Total Students	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White	79.7	80.1	79.4	80.3	79.9
Black	16.2	16.0	16.5	15.2	16.0
Hispanic	11.8	10.7	10.3	7.4	10.5

* Hispanic students may be of any race; therefore racial categories include Hispanics.

Source: Current Population Survey, March 1988.

Nine out of ten (90.5%) Hispanic 8th graders are enrolled in public schools, and most of the rest attend Catholic schools (7.9%). This attendance pattern is regional, however. In the Northeast, almost one in five Hispanic students attends a Catholic school (19.0%). The pattern also differs by subgroup; almost one in four Cuban 8th graders attends a Catholic school (24.3%).

Public school enrollment is projected to rise to almost 44 million in 2000, and nearly all the increase will be in minority -- especially Hispanic -- enrollment.[5] It is expected that between 1985 and 2000 there will be an increase of 2.4 million Hispanic children, 1.7 million Black children, and 66,000 White, non-Hispanic children.[6]

B. Enrollment Below Modal Grade Level

One of the most important enrollment-related measures of student progress is the extent to which they "keep up" with other children of their age, being promoted each year to the next grade level. Children enrolled below the grade in which most children their own age are found are considered to be enrolled "below modal grade." Research suggests that students who fall behind in grade level run a high risk of later dropping out of school. Enrollment below modal grade may be a result of being retained for a variety of reasons, including having a high number of absences because of illness, frequent moves or other

factors which interrupt attendance; or poor academic achievement and thus "failing" several subjects. A major factor in academic failure is poor reading skills, which may lead to low self-esteem causing the student to "give up" trying. Other reasons for holding a child back may include the teacher's opinion of the child's lack of "maturity" or "readiness" to advance to the next grade, or limited English proficiency which causes the child to be considered incapable of advancing.

Hispanics have far higher rates of enrollment below grade levels than Whites, and by the time they reach the age of 13, have higher rates than Blacks as well -- and there has been no overall improvement in the level of below-grade Hispanic enrollment in the past several years. In general, the proportion of Hispanic eight- and 13-year-olds enrolled below modal grade has remained fairly steady from 1984 to 1988, while the percentage of White eight-and 13-year-old students enrolled below grade level is decreasing. More Hispanic 13-year-olds are enrolled below model grade than other groups.

For all groups, more males are enrolled below grade level than females; minority males have far higher rates of below-grade-level enrollment than do females. Figures 3.3 and 3.4 show enrollment below modal grade for eight- and 13-year old students. While rates of Hispanic 8th grade male enrollment below grade level are increasing, rates for their Hispanic female counterparts are decreasing slightly.

FIGURE 3.3

STUDENT ENROLLMENT FOR 8-YEAR OLDS ONE OR MORE YEARS BEHIND MODAL GRADE

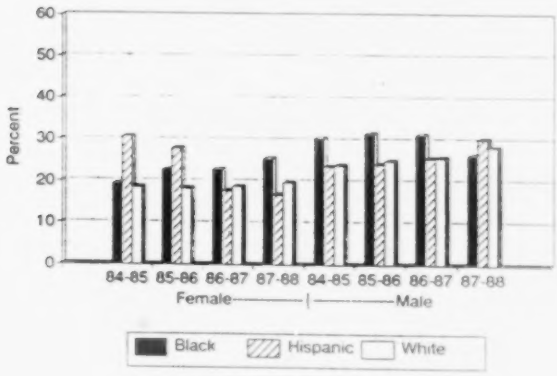
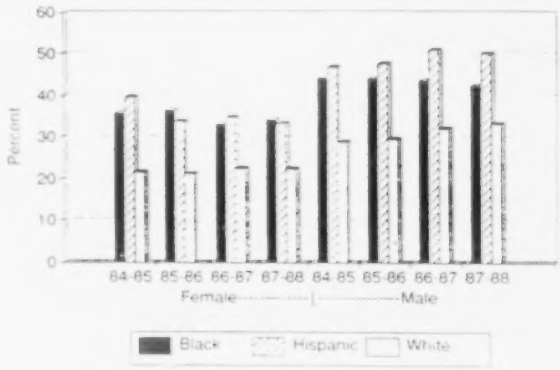


FIGURE 3.4

STUDENT ENROLLMENT FOR 13-YEAR OLDS ONE OR MORE YEARS BEHIND MODAL GRADE



C. Suspension Rates

Hispanics have high suspension rates in schools in states where they are highly concentrated, a serious concern since suspension of students is an important indicator of students' problems and progress and a risk factor for dropping out. Being suspended

from school means not being able to participate in regular educational activities in the classroom -- so students fall behind in subjects and tend to leave school because they are failing, as documented through research.

Hispanic student school suspensions in several states with large Hispanic enrollments are increasing. As reported by schools and school districts to the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, the States of Arizona, California, Colorado, Illinois, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, and Texas show a numerical increase in Hispanic student suspensions from 1980 to 1986, the most recent year for which data are available, while Florida and Michigan report decreases (See Figures 3.5 and 3.6).[7] The number of Hispanic student suspensions reported by California has increased by 36%, up from 60,743 in 1980, to 82,893 in 1986. In Texas, Hispanics as a percentage of total suspensions increased from 29% to 37%, although the total *number* of suspensions decreased. Hispanics make up 33% of Texas school enrollment.

FIGURE 3.5
PROPORTION OF HISPANIC SUSPENSIONS OF ALL SUSPENSIONS: 1980 & 1986

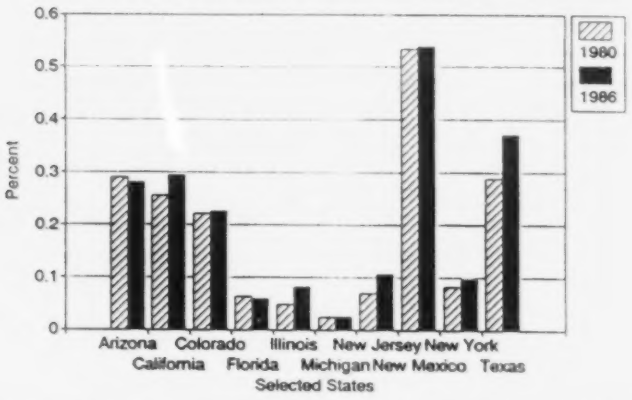
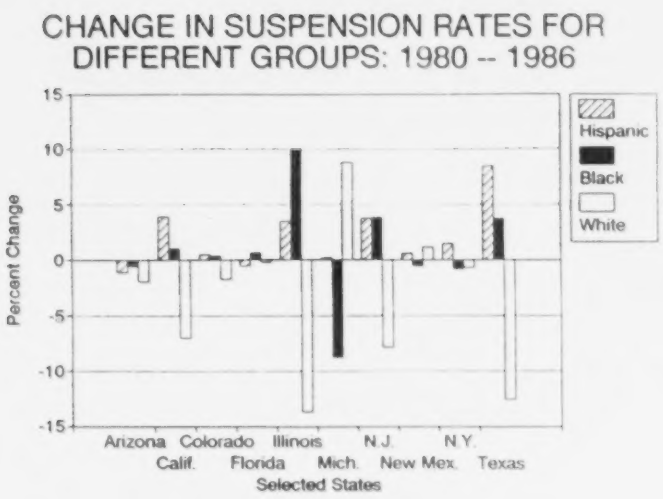


FIGURE 3.6
HISPANIC STUDENT SUSPENSIONS FOR SELECTED STATES
1980 AND 1986
(NUMBER AND PERCENT OF ALL SUSPENSIONS)

State	1980 Number	1980 Percent	1986 Number	1986 Percent
Arizona	5474	.29	5972	.28
California	60743	.26	82893	.29
Colorado	4386	.22	5424	.23
Florida	8022	.06	7291	.06
Illinois	4840	.05	6689	.08
Michigan	3168	.02	2730	.03
New Jersey	6284	.07	7248	.11
New Mexico	5950	.53	8156	.54
New York	9727	.08	12550	.10
Texas	29954	.29	18608	.37

Source: Office of Civil Rights Elementary and Secondary School Civil Rights Surveys, 1980 and 1986.

FIGURE 3.7



Suspension rates for White students as a proportion of their enrollment are decreasing substantially, while suspension rates for Black and Hispanic students are increasing dramatically. The data from 1980 and 1986 suggest that Hispanic students are more likely than Blacks or Whites to be suspended from school (See Figure 3.7).

D. Bilingual Education Service Rates

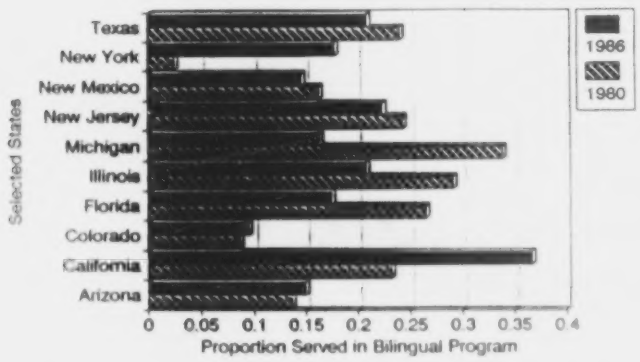
Information on the level of bilingual services for Hispanic students in public schools provides an indication of the extent to which students are benefiting from bilingual education programs, including federally funded services. The Office of Civil Rights within the U.S. Department of Education collects information on the number of students served in bilingual programs, as reported by school districts for selected states with large Hispanic and foreign-born populations.[8]

In most states, the rate of bilingual education services for Hispanics has been decreasing in recent years, at a time when the demand for services has been increasing -- due to increased Hispanic enrollment and an increased number of limited-English-proficient (LEP) children. The number of LEP children grew two and one-half times as rapidly as school enrollment during the 1980s, and this rate of growth is expected to continue throughout the next decade, according to the National Association for Bilingual Education.

Among states with large Hispanic populations, only in California and Arizona has the rate of bilingual services for Hispanics increased in recent years. In California, the state with the largest Hispanic population and the largest percentage of foreign-born residents (more than 35%), approximately 36.7% of Hispanics enrolled in the public schools in 1986 were receiving bilingual services -- an increase from 23.2% in 1980 (See Figure 3.8). Arizona also experienced a slight increase in the bilingual service rate for Hispanics, up from 13.6% in 1980 to 15.0% in 1986.

FIGURE 3.8

BILINGUAL SERVICE RATES FOR SELECTED STATES: 1980 & 1986



Note: The 1980 data from New York appear to be incomplete.

Bilingual service rates for other selected states decreased from 1980 to 1986. For example, bilingual services rates for Hispanic students in Florida declined from 26.5% in 1980, to 17.5% in 1986. Texas' Hispanic student bilingual service rates fell from 24.1% in 1980 to 20.9% in 1986. Michigan experienced the most dramatic decrease for Hispanics, from 33.9% to 16.4% in 1986.

Bilingual services to Asian students have also declined in several states. Asian students in Illinois experienced a decline from 19.4% in 1980 to 13.6%; in New Mexico the decrease was from 30.9% to 19.3%. Virtually no change occurred in bilingual service rates for Black or White students in the selected states.

E. Achievement Test Scores

Several national surveys provide achievement test scores for elementary and secondary school students. Test scores for two major assessments are summarized here: those of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which tests students at ages 9, 13, and 17; and the National Education Longitudinal Survey (NELS), which tests 8th graders.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress completes a series of surveys to assess the reading, writing, mathematics, science, and computer competence of the nation's 9-, 13- and 17-year-olds, ranging between the 3rd and 12th grades. NAEP data provide trends in reading and writing achievement scores over time. NAEP does not "double count" Hispanics, so all statistics from that report compare Hispanics with White non-Hispanics and Black non-Hispanics.

The National Education Longitudinal Survey, first conducted in 1988, surveys a large sample (24,599) of 8th graders; included are tests of math and reading proficiency. Since the 1988 survey was the first NELS survey, it provides only a snapshot of the math and reading skills of the nation's 8th graders. NELS does not "double count" Hispanics, so all statistics from that report compare Hispanics with White non-Hispanics, Black non-Hispanics, and Native-American non-Hispanics. NELS provides subgroup data for Mexican Americans,

Puerto Ricans, and Cubans, but does not distinguish Central and South Americans from other Hispanics.

According to the NAEP surveys, minority students, including Blacks and Hispanics, appear to be making gains in certain test scores but not in others; their scores remain lower than those for White students and in some cases the gap is widening. According to NELS:88, national assessment tests show an upward trend in Hispanic and Black math scores, but failure rates remain high and the gap between minorities and White students very wide.

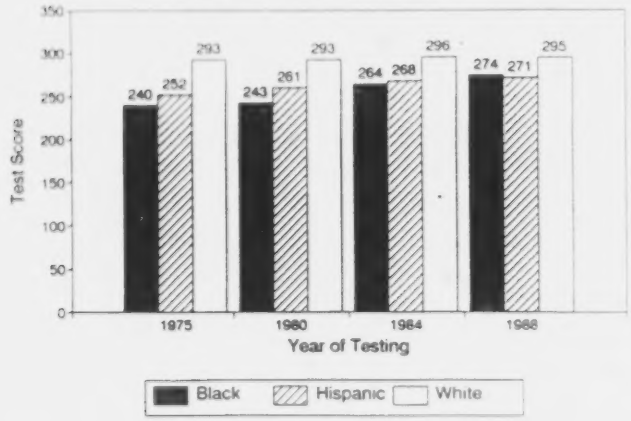
1. Reading and Writing Proficiency

Only Blacks have shown improvement in their reading achievement scores over the past decade, according to NAEP's 1988 examination of the reading and writing skills of the nation's 9-, 13- and 17-year-olds. Findings were based on national assessments which showed virtually no change in the average reading and writing proficiency scores of American youth over the previous 10 to 15 years. Moreover, the gap between minority performance levels and those of their White counterparts remains large.

NAEP found that White students' reading achievement scores for all three age cohorts have not changed significantly since 1971. They remain significantly ahead of both Hispanic and Black students' scores. Black students were the only group to show marked improvement, especially in the 17-year-old cohort.

FIGURE 3.9

TRENDS IN READING PROFICIENCY FOR 17-YEAR-OLDS BY RACE/ETHNICITY



Hispanic students have made no such gains. In 1975 Hispanic students in all three age cohorts outperformed their Black classmates; however, in 1988, the NAEP report found that "Black students at all three ages were performing as well, if not better than their Hispanic classmates." Figure 3.9 illustrates the gap between the scores of Hispanic, Black and White students assessed.[9]

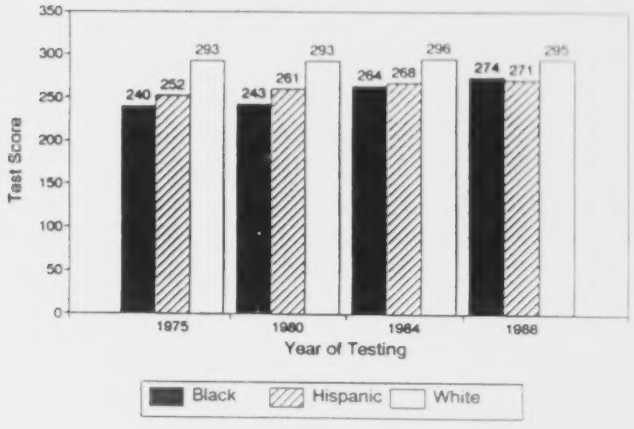
NAEP measures reading proficiency by identifying five fundamental reading levels and reading skills students should possess at each of the five levels. NAEP then assigns each level a numerical value. The five levels and respective skills are: Rudimentary (150) -- the ability to carry out simple, discrete reading tasks; Basic (200) -- the

ability to understand specific or sequentially related information; Intermediate (250) -- the capability to search for specific information, interrelate ideas, and make generalizations; Adept (300) -- the ability to find, understand, summarize and explain relatively complicated information; and Advanced (350) -- the ability to synthesize and learn from specialized reading materials.

The gap between the writing scores of White and minority students in the 4th, 8th and 11th grades has not changed significantly since 1984, and none of the three groups has shown major gains during that period. The gap in writing performance of minority and White students remains so large that, according to NAEP, "in 1984 and in 1988 Hispanic and Black 11th graders wrote less well than their 8th grade White counterparts." Figure 3.10 illustrates the gap between the writing abilities of White, Black and Hispanic students.[10]

FIGURE 3.10

TRENDS IN READING PROFICIENCY FOR 17-YEAR-OLDS BY RACE/ETHNICITY



NAEP measures writing aptitude by examining informative, persuasive and imaginative writing samples of students in grades 4, 8, and 11. The average writing achievement scores of these students are summarized on a common scale that ranges from 0 to 400.

Hispanic and Black 8th graders are much less likely than Whites to score at an advanced level on reading proficiency tests. Only about one in five Hispanics (20.5%) and less than one in five Blacks (18.3%) scores at an advanced level, compared to 38.9% of Whites (See Figure 3.11). About one-tenth of Whites (110.4%) score at a below-basic level, compared to one-fifth of Hispanics (21.0%) and nearly one-fourth of Blacks (23.6%). Among Hispanic subgroups, Cubans are most likely (30.1%) and Mexican Americans least likely (17.9%) to score at an advanced reading level.

Eighth graders who usually speak English score much higher on the reading proficiency tests than those who usually speak either Spanish or other languages. Nearly one-third (32.5%) of students who usually speak Spanish score at the below-basic level in reading proficiency tests and less than one in ten (9.9%) score at the advanced level; scores are similar for the math proficiency tests.

Hispanic 8th graders receive lower reading scores than other students regardless of language use. Hispanic 8th graders who report usually speaking English score lower in

reading scores than other students who usually speak English. For students who usually speak English, about one in eight scores below basic in reading (13.1%), compared to almost one in five Hispanics (19.3%). Similarly, more than a third (34.7%) of all students who usually speak English score at the advanced level in reading, compared to less than a quarter (22.4%) of Hispanic students who usually speak English.

FIGURE 3.11
READING PROFICIENCY LEVELS OF 8TH GRADERS
BY RACIAL/ETHNIC AND LANGUAGE GROUP
(PERCENT)

Student Characteristics	Below Basic	Basic	Advanced
TOTAL	13.7	52.4	34.0
RACE/ETHNICITY			
Asian and Pacific Islander	14.8	47.3	37.9
Hispanic	21.0	58.6	20.5
Black	23.6	58.1	18.3
White	10.4	50.7	38.9
American Indian and Native Alaskan	27.3	57.4	15.4
HISPANIC SUBGROUP			
Mexican/Chicano	20.0	62.1	17.9
Cuban	20.7	49.2	30.1
Puerto Rican	24.5	53.2	22.2
Other Hispanic	21.7	52.5	25.8
LANGUAGE USUALLY SPOKEN			
English	13.1	52.2	34.7
Spanish	32.5	57.7	9.9
Other Languages	28.6	53.8	17.6
LANGUAGE USUALLY SPOKEN -- HISPANIC POPULATION			
English	19.3	58.3	22.4
Spanish	32.9	59.9	7.3

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey," with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

2. Mathematics and Science Proficiency

Although Hispanic and Black students at all three age levels showed some improvement throughout the years in their mathematics and science proficiency, the gains were not large enough to close the performance gaps between them and their White counterparts, according to NAEP (See Figures 3.12 and 3.13). NAEP assessed trends in mathematics proficiency and achievement from 1973 to 1986, and in science proficiency and achievement from 1969 to 1986 for 9-, 13-, and 17-year-olds. In 1986, Black and Hispanic 13-year-olds showed average science proficiency below that of White 9-year-olds, and the average proficiency of Black and Hispanic 17-year-old students was at or below that of White 13-year-olds.

FIGURE 3.12

TRENDS IN SCIENCE PROFICIENCY FOR 17-YEAR-OLDS BY RACE/ETHNIC GROUP

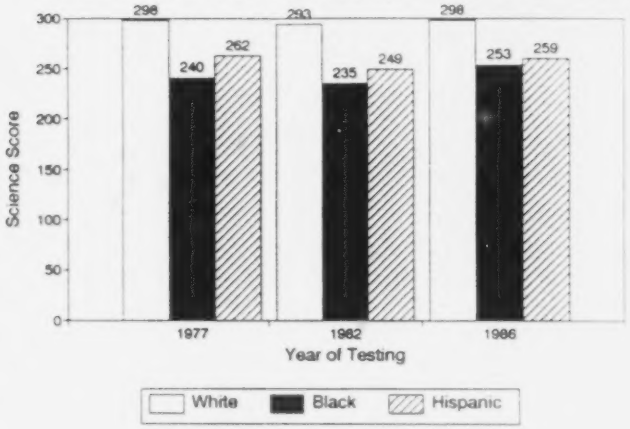
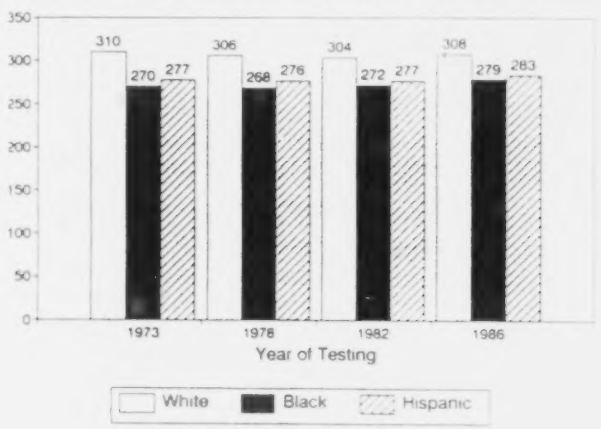


FIGURE 3.13

TRENDS IN MATH PROFICIENCY FOR 7-YEAR-OLDS BY RACE/ETHNIC GROUP



Three out of four Hispanic 8th graders cannot pass a test of simple mathematical operations that use decimals or fractions, according to NELS:88. National assessment tests show an upward trend for math scores for Hispanic students, but NELS:88 shows that there are still high failure rates.

Asian and White 8th graders are three to four time more likely to score at the advanced level in mathematics than Hispanic and Black students. The disparity is so marked that the NELS:88 report concludes that: "The continuing evidence of students' lack of success at high level skills suggests that changes in academic progress, curriculum and instruction may be necessary to improve the situation, especially for at-risk students."[11] Figure 3.14 shows the distribution of mathematics proficiency as test score ranges for various student characteristics.

FIGURE 3.14
MATHEMATICS PROFICIENCY LEVELS OF 8TH GRADERS BY RACIAL/ETHNIC AND LANGUAGE GROUP (PERCENT)

Student Characteristics	PROFICIENCY LEVEL Below Basic	Basic	Inter-mediate	Advanced
TOTAL	18.8	40.2	22.1	18.8
RACE/ETHNICITY				
Asian and Pacific Islander	13.4	30.7	21.2	34.7
Hispanic	27.6	46.8	16.9	8.7
Black	28.9	49.4	16.5	5.3
White	15.5	37.9	24.3	22.4
American Indian and Native Alaskan	32.3	49.8	13.0	4.8
HISPANIC SUBGROUP				
Mexican/Chicano	28.6	48.8	15.4	7.3
Cuban	25.2	38.6	18.3	17.9
Puerto Rican	30.2	45.7	17.6	6.4
Other Hispanic	23.2	43.1	22.1	11.6
LANGUAGE USUALLY SPOKEN				
English	18.3	40.1	22.4	19.2
Spanish	34.4	43.0	14.4	8.1
Other Languages	28.9	30.0	14.1	27.0

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey," with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

In all Hispanic subgroups, 8th graders are far more likely to score below the basic level than at the advanced level in math. Puerto Rican 8th graders have the lowest math scores; 30.2% score at below basic level in mathematics, and 6.4% at the advanced level. Mexican students do only slightly better: 28.6% score at the below basic level and 7.3% at the advanced level. Only among Cubans and other Hispanics do at least one-third of 8th graders score at an intermediate or advanced level; 17.9% of Cubans and 11.6% of other Hispanic 8th graders score in the advanced category.

More than a quarter of all 8th graders who most frequently speak a language other than English score below the basic level in mathematics. Although advanced level

scores are lower for students who report usually speaking Spanish, scores are higher if the student reports usually speaking other languages (presumably this represents Asian students).

3. Computer Competence

The first national assessment of student computer competence was conducted by NAEP in the 1985-86 school year and surveyed 3rd, 7th, and 11th graders. Computer science is one of the "new basics" courses identified in the 1983 National Commission on Excellence in Education's "Nation At Risk." The three major categories used to assess computer competence included: knowledge of computer technology, understanding of computer applications, and understanding of computer programming.

Hispanic and Black students differ little from each other in their computer competence, and both scored below Whites. Of all Hispanic 3rd graders surveyed, 29.8% are computer competent, compared to 36.1% of Hispanic 7th graders and 40.2% of Hispanic 11th graders. The mean scores for White students on the computer assessment survey average between 5% and 8% higher.

White students are more likely than Hispanics or Blacks to receive computer instruction at school and have access to computers at home. Not surprisingly, those who have experience, instruction, and home access to computers have higher levels of computer skills and knowledge. When asked whether they had used a computer, 78.0% of White 3rd graders said they had, compared to 69.3% of Hispanics and 64.5% of Blacks. Of White 7th graders, 91.7% said they had used a computer, compared to 83.1% of Hispanics and 80.5% of Blacks; 88.5% of White 11th graders said they had used a computer, compared to 80.2% of Hispanics and 81.2% of Blacks.

The consistent pattern is that the higher the parents' education, the more likely the children are to have used a computer, to be studying computers in school, and to have a computer at home. Having a computer at home appeared to offer an advantage in computer competence to all demographic subgroups. In addition, according to NAEP, "students from advantaged (higher SES) metropolitan areas were the most computer competent across all three grade levels, and students from disadvantaged (lower SES) metropolitan areas were the least competent."

The lack of role models appears key to the limited computer competence of Hispanic as well as Black students. Hispanics are underrepresented as computer coordinators in schools, compared to the percentage of Hispanics in the general population. The problem of underrepresentation is especially apparent in the 7th and 11th grades. Only 2.8% of computer coordinators in the 7th grade are Hispanic, 4.0% are Black, and 90.7% are White; only 1.1% of computer coordinators in the 11th grade are Hispanic, while 4.4% are Black and 92.9% are White.

F. Classroom Grades

The National Education Longitudinal Study shows self-reported grades for 8th graders by racial and ethnic group, with grades presented by quartile (See Figure 3.15).

FIGURE 3.15
SELF-REPORTED GRADES BY QUARTILE FOR 8TH GRADERS BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND SEX
(PERCENT)

	GRADE QUARTILE			
Student Characteristics	Lowest Quartile	25-49%	50-74%	Highest Quartile
TOTAL	24.9	22.2	24.6	28.3
SEX				
Male	28.7	22.6	23.7	25.0
Female	21.1	21.9	25.5	31.5
Hispanic Male	33.1	23.8	25.8	17.3
Hispanic Female	28.1	25.2	24.7	22.1
RACE/ETHNICITY				
Asian and Pacific Islander	16.5	16.2	21.3	46.1
Hispanic	30.6	24.5	25.2	19.7
Black	28.8	28.3	26.3	16.6
White	23.4	20.9	24.4	31.2
American Indian and Native Alaskan	36.7	27.6	23.1	12.6
HISPANIC SUBGROUP				
Mexican/Chicano	31.1	24.3	25.4	19.2
Cuban	30.1	22.7	20.9	26.3
Puerto Rican	34.2	24.3	23.1	18.3
Other Hispanic	26.6	25.2	27.7	20.4

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey," with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

Hispanic 8th graders are far less likely than Asian or White students, and slightly more likely than Black students, to receive grades in the top quartile (25%). Native Americans are least likely to receive grades in the top quartile. About one in five Hispanics (19.7%) reports grades in the top quartile, while three in ten (30.6%) report grades in the bottom quartile. Among subgroups, Cubans are most likely to have grades in the top quartile, and Puerto Ricans are most likely to report grades in the bottom quartile. Female Hispanic students get slightly higher grades than males, following the general pattern.

G. Preparing for High School

Eighth grade marks a transition point for most students, with the following year bringing a change of school, fellow students, and teachers. The National Education Longitudinal Survey provides information on how Hispanic and other 8th graders plan for these changes and on their expectations for this transition (See Figure 3.16).

Hispanic 8th graders have less definite plans for high school and show less tendency to pursue academic programs than any other ethnic group except American Indians. Less than one-quarter of Hispanic 8th graders (22.5%) plan to enter a college-preparatory, academic high school program, compared with 30.9% of White, 24.7% of Black students, and 37.1% of Asian and Pacific Islander students.

Many Hispanic students appear unsure of their high school plans; nearly two out of five (39.4%) say "other" or "don't know" when asked about what program they plan to enter in high school, compared to 31.8% of White and 34.0% of Black students.

Cubans are far more likely than other Hispanic 8th graders to have plans for enrolling in a college preparatory program. Almost one-third (30.9%) of Cuban students plan on an academic program, compared to one-fifth of Puerto Ricans (21.1%) and Mexican Americans (21.8%). Puerto Ricans are most likely to plan to enroll in vocational, technical, or business programs; 28.5% plan to enter such programs, compared to 16.3% of Cubans. Mexican American students appear least certain about their plans, with two out of five (41.5%) reporting "other" or that they don't know, compared to more than one in three Puerto Ricans (36.7%) and one in four Cubans (26.8%).

The NELS:88 report notes that lack of planning for high school is associated with low test scores, low grades, and low self-esteem, while students high in these three measures are likely to plan to enroll in college preparatory programs. Although Hispanics' test scores at the 8th-grade level are comparable to those of Blacks, their plans for high school are more uncertain and this may place them at a competitive disadvantage as early as 8th grade.

Eighth graders -- including Hispanics -- are somewhat more sure about what they want to do in the world of work than they are about the specific academic program it takes to get there. Almost half (47.0%) of all 8th grade students want to be in the professional/technical, business, or managerial world. Hispanics choose this career area slightly less frequently (43.8%), compared to 47.4% of Blacks and 46.8% of Whites; Native Americans (41.6%) have the lowest plans to forge a career in this area. One-eighth of Hispanic 8th graders (12.5%) indicate they "don't know" about their desired occupation; this is slightly higher than the one-tenth of other groups who report similar uncertainty.

FIGURE 3.16
HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM ENROLLMENT PLANS OF 8TH GRADERS BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND SEX (PERCENT)

	HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM					
Student Characteristics	College Prep Academic	Vocational Technical Business	General High Sch. Program	Special Program	Other	Don't Know
TOTAL	29.2	18.0	14.3	5.4	8.1	25.1
SEX						
Male	28.8	19.6	14.0	4.3	8.5	24.8
Female	29.6	16.4	14.5	6.5	7.6	25.4
RACE/ETHNICITY						
Asian and Pacific Islander	37.1	17.6	9.7	4.0	6.9	24.6
Hispanic	22.5	22.3	10.6	5.3	10.4	29.0
Black	24.7	25.9	9.7	5.6	10.9	23.1
White	30.9	15.9	16.0	5.5	7.2	24.6
American Indian and Native Alaskan	17.2	22.8	9.6	7.2	8.7	34.6
HISPANIC SUBGROUP						
Mexican/Chicano	21.8	22.1	10.5	4.2	9.7	31.8
Cuban	30.9	16.3	15.7	10.3	6.9	19.9
Puerto Rican	21.1	28.5	8.0	5.7	14.8	21.9
Other Hispanic	24.0	20.8	11.5	7.5	10.8	25.4

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey" with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

H. Dropout Rates and Associated Factors

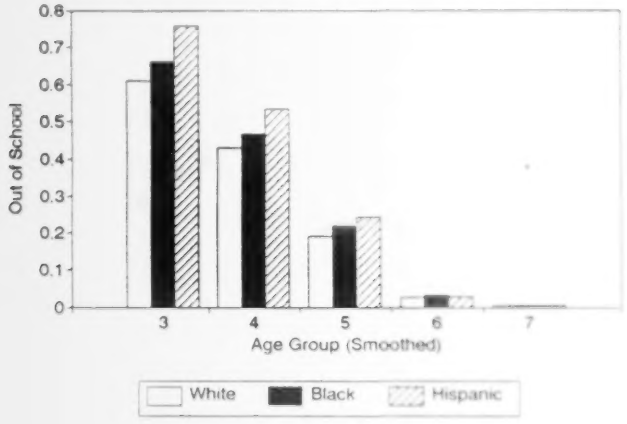
1. Hispanic Dropout Rates

Dropout figures can vary from study to study depending on the measure used and the definition of the term "dropout." Dropout statistics and definitions also vary from state to state due to the variability in the manner in which local school districts collect and report such data. For purposes of this study, the term "dropout" refers to persons who are not enrolled in school and have no high school diploma. NCLR's figures are provided both for persons 18-19 years old, and for persons 19 years old and over.

Regardless of the measure used, Hispanics continue to have the highest school dropout rates of any major group. About 43% of Hispanics aged 19 years old or over are not enrolled in high school and have no high school diploma.

FIGURE 3.17

OUT OF SCHOOL RATE FOR AGES 3 TO 7
BY RACE/ETHNIC GROUP: OCTOBER 1988



Hispanics spend fewer years in school than their Black or White counterparts -- entering school later and leaving school earlier. As shown in Figure 3.17.[12] Hispanics are less likely to attend nursery school or kindergarten, and have lower school enrollment rates than Blacks or Whites up to age 6. As noted in NCLR's previous report on Hispanic educational status, Hispanics also drop out of school earlier than Black or White dropouts. By age 16-17, almost one in five Hispanics (19.5%) has left school without a diploma, compared to less than one in 16 Blacks (6.0%) and one in 15 Whites (7.1%). At ages 18-19, almost one-third of Hispanics (31.3%) are dropouts, compared to about one in six Blacks (17.9%) and one in seven Whites (14.3%) (See Figures 3.18 and 3.19[13]).

Hispanic females tend to drop out slightly earlier than Hispanic males, but have slightly lower overall dropout rates -- 42.3% for males and 41.1% for females. By ages 16-17, 21.4% of Hispanic females have dropped out of school, compared to 18.1% of Hispanic males, but at ages 18-19, 27.3% of Hispanic females have dropped out, compared to 35.2% of Hispanic males. Sex differences of this magnitude are not found for Blacks or Whites.

FIGURE 3.18

NOT ENROLLED & NO HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA
(DROPOUT RATE AS OF OCTOBER 1988)

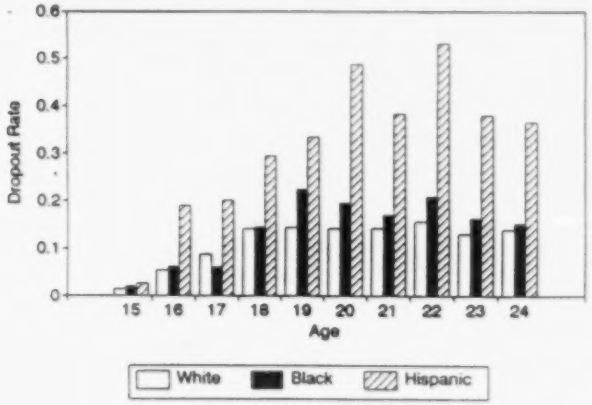
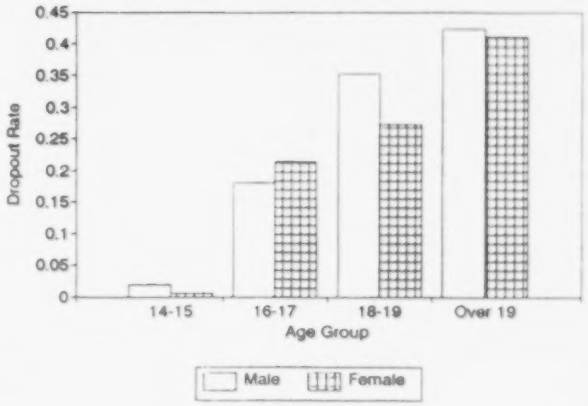


FIGURE 3.19

HISPANIC DROPOUT RATE BY GENDER
AND AGE: OCTOBER 1988



2. Factors Linked to Dropping Out

While there are many reasons why students leave school without a high school diploma, the factors most consistently linked to dropping out have to do with family socioeconomic status (SES) and other aspects of family background. In addition to personal characteristics, important factors include characteristics of the schools they attend. Caution should be taken in assessing the relationship between student behaviors and choices (e.g. marriage, pregnancy, working) and the decision to drop out. While a relationship is indicated, these factors may not be the cause of students' leaving school. There may be other, intervening factors.[14]

Among the factors within the schools' control are attendance, discipline and promotion policies, resource allocation, hiring practices, the availability of special instruction to meet special needs, inservice training for teachers and counselors, and provisions made to ensure parent involvement. Other factors contributing to decisions to leave school include the lack of Hispanic role models among teachers and other school staff, the limited attention counselors report giving to Hispanic students, underserving of Hispanics by work-study and cooperative education programs, the lack of appropriate programs to meet language needs and involve parents, and the fact that many Hispanics attend schools in districts with low per- pupil expenditures, high pupil/teacher ratios and limited overall resources.

The 1982 Follow-up to the High School and Beyond Study indicated that early marriage and/or pregnancy were often listed by Hispanic girls as contributing reasons for dropping out of school; one-third reported leaving because of marriage or plans to marry, and one-fourth listing pregnancy. About 26% of male dropouts indicated that they left

because they had been offered a job and chose to work, and 17% indicated that they had been expelled or suspended.[15]

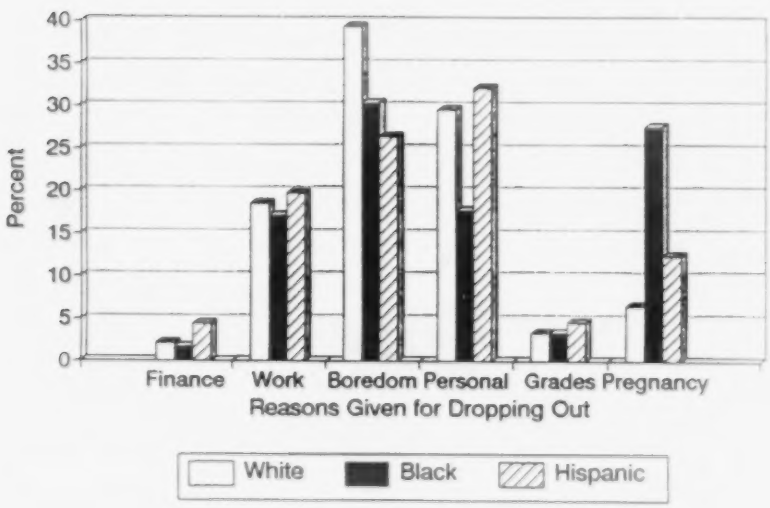
The largest group of Hispanic students (34% of males and 32% of females) reported leaving school because of poor grades. Other national data on Hispanic educational attainment support the youths' contention that they dropped out in large part due to poor grades and low attainment that led them to conclude that school was "not for them." Again, this does not demonstrate a cause and effect relationship; other factors -- within the student, the family, or the school -- may have caused the poor grades.

Other data from a 1986 Educational Testing Service (ETS) report reasons given by young adults, 21-25 years old, for not completing a high school education.[16] Young adults were asked to give their reasons for not completing high school. The question was open-ended, and any answer was accepted. ETS researchers then summarized into one of six categories: financial problems; going to work or into the military; pregnancy; loss of interest in school or behavior problems; poor grades or academic problems; and personal reasons, such as marriage or relocation that were not necessarily related to school.

Most Hispanics report loss of interest, personal reasons, or work as causes for dropping out of school, as shown in Figures 3.20[17] and 3.21. Relatively few young adults report grades or finances as reasons for leaving school. Hispanics are more likely to report work, personal and and financial reasons for leaving school, and less likely to report pregnancy or boredom as reasons, than their Black non-Hispanic or White non-Hispanic counterparts.

FIGURE 3.20

REASONS GIVEN BY YOUNG ADULTS FOR NOT COMPLETING HIGH SCHOOL



The finding that poor grades is not a major reason for dropping out is at variance with other studies where academic failure is cited as a chief predictor of subsequent dropping out of school. Whether the difference is due to young adults attributing dropping out to factors other than their academic performance is open to research.

FIGURE 3.21
REASONS GIVEN BY YOUNG ADULTS
FOR DROPPING OUT AND NOT COMPLETING HIGH SCHOOL

Reason	White	Black	Hispanic
Finance	2.1	1.7	4.4
Work	18.5	17.1	19.7
Pregnancy	6.5	27.5	12.4
Boredom	39.3	30.4	26.3
Grades	3.3	3.4	4.5
Personal	29.5	17.7	32.1
Sample Size	300	249	114
Population Est.	2,047,289	626,895	304,499
Percent of Total	12.8	23.3	24.1

Sources: "Literacy: Profiles of America's Young Adults, ETS Report, No. 16PL-02. Page 47.

3. Early Identification of Risk Factors

Americans cannot legally drop out of school until they are 16, but studies show that many "risk factors" for failure and dropping out can be identified much earlier. Drawing from experience with longitudinal surveys and from the literature, the National Education Longitudinal Study identifies and analyzes several factors that put 8th grade students "at risk" of failing and dropping out of school in the future.

The characteristics identified as associated with school failure are, "...(among others) single-parent family, low parent education and income, limited English proficiency, and having a sibling who dropped out of high school." [18]. Of course, this association shows relationships and not simple cause and effect. The NELS:88 report notes that "having a single risk factor does not indicate a child is destined for failure," but it adds that "...certain combinations of risk factors have been shown to be particularly influential."

Compared with other groups, Hispanic 8th graders are much more "at risk" of failure and dropping out. The NELS:88 report sums up this risk:

> Students with two or more "risk factors" are twice as likely as those with no risk factors to be in the lowest grades quartiles ... and lowest test quartile....
>
> Students with two or more "risk factors" are six times as likely as those with no risk factors to expect not to graduate from high school...."[19]

Hispanic 8th graders are two and one-half times as likely as Whites and slightly more likely than Blacks to have two or more risk factors; more than one-third (36.6%) of Hispanics, compared to 14.0% of Whites and 40.9% of Blacks, have two or more risk factors. Hispanic students also have the second lowest rate of freedom from risk of all groups (32.0%) and the second highest incidence of a single risk factor of all groups (31.5%). This distribution of risks for different groups of students is shown in Figure 3.22. Within the Hispanic population, Puerto Rican and Mexican American students are most likely to have two or more risk factors, and Cubans are least likely; nearly two in five Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans and about one in four Cubans have two or more risk factors.

FIGURE 3.22
8TH GRADERS WITH ONE OR MORE RISK FACTORS, BY RACE/ETHNICITY
(PERCENT)

Race/Ethnicity	No Risk Factors*	One Risk Factor	Two or More Risk Factors
TOTAL	53.3	26.3	20.4
RACE/ETHNICITY			
Asian/Pacific Islander	57.5	27.3	15.2
Hispanic	32.0	31.5	36.6
Black*	28.4	30.7	40.9
White*	61.5	24.5	14.0
American Indian / Alaskan Native	35.3	33.2	31.5
HISPANIC SUBGROUP			
Mexican/Chicano	27.9	32.7	39.3
Cuban	45.9	31.1	23.0
Puerto Rican	30.2	29.0	40.8
Other Hispanic	40.7	29.6	29.7

* Includes non-Hispanic students referred to in tables and in the report as Black or White based on self-report.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey" with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

Risk factors for these analyses include single-parent family, low parent education, limited English proficiency, low family income, sibling dropout, and home alone more than three hours on weekdays. The distribution of these various risk factors falls heavily on the Hispanic population, as shown in Figure 3.23.

FIGURE 3.23
8TH GRADERS WITH VARIOUS RISK FACTORS, BY RACE/ETHNICITY
(PERCENT)

	Parent is Single	Parents Have No H.S. Diploma	Limited English Proficiency	Income Less Than $15000	Has a Sibling Who Dropped Out	Home Alone More Than 3 Hrs.
TOTAL	22.3	10.5	2.3	21.3	10.0	13.6
TOTAL HISPANIC	23.4	33.3	8.9	37.5	24.7	16.3
RACE/ETHNICITY						
Asian/Pacific Islander	14.2	8.8	7.1	17.8	6.1	15.9
Hispanic	23.4	33.4	8.8	37.5	16.0	16.3
Black	46.5	15.8	1.6	47.0	13.0	19.5
White	17.7	6.2	0.8	14.1	8.8	12.0
American Indian & Native Alaskan	31.1	13.4	8.6	40.1	15.1	18.6
HISPANIC SUBGROUP						
Mexican/Chicano	20.7	41.1	9.2	40.5	24.3	15.7
Cuban	22.5	15.3	6.6	19.3	13.2	18.5
Puerto Rican	33.9	29.4	9.5	42.9	35.0	16.3
Other Hispanic	25.4	18.4	8.2	30.8	24.5	16.6

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey," with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

The risk-factor model, as described by NCES, appears to understate the risks for Hispanics. Although more Blacks have one risk factor or two or more risk factors than Hispanics, more Black students complete high school than do Hispanic students. Moreover, more Black than Hispanic students go on to obtain postsecondary degrees. Clearly there is more to educational risk that simple summation of the risk factors identified in the NELS:88 report.

Some risk factors have greater effect than others and some combinations are especially important. As the NELS:88 report notes, two combinations considered particularly important are single-parent plus low income and low parental education plus limited English proficiency[20].

The risk factor of coming from a family where both parents lack a high school diploma exists for 41.1% of Mexican American students, a much higher rate than for Puerto Ricans (29.4%) or other Hispanics (18.4%). For Puerto Rican students, major risk factors include the single-parent home (33.9% compared to 23.4% for Hispanic students overall) and having a sibling who has dropped out (35% versus 24.7% for all Hispanics).

Major risk factors affecting Hispanic students are described below, using NELS:88 data.

a. Risk Factor: Single-Parent Family

Living in a single-parent family is associated with low grades. The NELS:88 report found that students who score in the bottom quartile (25%) of test scores are twice as likely as those in the highest quartile to live in single-parent families (30.0% versus 15.0%). Students in the top quartile of test scores are most likely to live with both parents (73.8%).

Nearly one in four (23.4%) Hispanic 8th graders lives in a single-parent family, usually with a mother but no father. This percentage lies between that for White students (17.7%) and that for Black students (46.5%). Among Hispanics, Puerto Rican students most often come from single-parent homes (33.9%), usually living with their mother (28.7%).

The relationship between family composition and test scores applies to Hispanics. Of Hispanic students in the highest test score quartile, 69.2% live with both parents, and 17.7% live in a single-parent household. Of the lowest-scoring Hispanic students, 26.8% come from single-parent households.

Hispanic students living in urban areas are more likely than those in rural areas to live with a single parent. More than one-fourth (28.0%) of urban 8th grade Hispanics live with a single parent, compared to less than one-fifth of rural 8th graders (18.0%), but the great majority of Hispanics (more than 90%) live in urban areas.

b. Risk Factor: Low Parental Education Level

Parental education level, defined as the highest level of education completed by either parent, is a key predictor of a student's success in school, according

to the NELS:88 report. Hispanic students are much more likely than any other group to have at least one parent who did not complete high school (33.3%) -- more than five times as likely as Whites (6.2%) and twice as likely as Black students (15.8%), as shown in Figure 3.24, below.

FIGURE 3.24
8TH GRADERS FROM FAMILIES
WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PARENTAL EDUCATION
(PERCENT)

	PARENT EDUCATION				
Background Characteristics	Less than High School	High School Grad	Some College	College Grad	Graduate Degree
TOTAL	10.5	20.9	42.1	14.2	12.3
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian/ Pacific Islander	9.1	12.8	33.0	23.3	21.7
Hispanic	33.3	18.0	36.2	6.5	5.9
Black	15.8	23.8	46.8	7.5	6.2
White	6.2	21.2	42.3	16.3	14.0
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	14.7	23.7	45.2	10.6	5.8
HISPANIC SUBGROUP					
Mexican/Chicano	41.1	17.5	34.0	4.6	2.8
Cuban	15.3	11.4	45.4	15.0	12.9
Puerto Rican	29.4	22.5	35.2	8.2	4.6
Other Hispanic	18.4	18.0	40.7	9.4	13.5
LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY FOR ALL STUDENTS					
Limited English	38.9	21.1	28.5	6.4	5.1
Non-Limited English	9.9	20.9	42.4	14.4	12.4
LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY FOR HISPANIC STUDENTS					
Limited English	56.0	18.3	21.7	2.8	1.2
Non-Limited English	31.2	18.0	37.6	6.9	6.3

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey," with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

For Hispanic 8th graders, a low level of parental education is linked with students having limited English proficiency (LEP) and low ranking in composite test scores. Of students in the lowest quartile of test scores, 43.3% have families who did not complete high school, compared to 10.3% of students in the highest quartile. Overall, students with limited English proficiency are four times as likely to have parents without a high school education as are students who are not LEP (See Figure 3.24). In general, about two out of five LEP students (38.9%) come from families where neither parent completed high school. The rate is higher for Hispanic students: almost three out of five Hispanic LEP students (56.0%) come from families where neither parent has a high school education -- and only one in 100 (1.2%) has a parent with a graduate degree. Even where the student is English-proficient, more than three in ten (31.2%) of parents have less than a high school education.

Students' English proficiency levels are high where parental educational attainment is high; this is more true for Hispanics than for the general population. Figure 3.24 shows that limited English proficiency is less likely for Hispanics than the general population where parents have a college education.

Parents' education also is closely associated with students' achievement in school. The NELS:88 report notes that children who score in the bottom quartile on the cognitive test are ten times as likely as those in the top quartile to have parents who did not graduate from high school.[21]

Level of parental education is also strongly linked with student achievement for Hispanic students. Mexican Americans, who have the lowest rate of graduation from high school,[22] also have the highest proportion of parents with less than a high school education. Puerto Rican students are more likely to graduate from high school, and they are less likely to have parents who lack a high school education (29.4% versus 41.1%). Except for level of parent education, these two groups of students have comparable risk factors.

The implication from other studies is that parental education level may have particular importance as a predictor of school completion, since it appears to be related to differences in school completion between groups of students who are otherwise similar with respect to risk factors. The risk factor of low parental education level is much higher for Hispanics (33.3%) than for Blacks (15.8%) or American Indians and Alaskan Natives (14.7%). Hispanics are not worse off than these two groups in family income. level.

c. Risk Factor: Low Family Income and Poverty

For Hispanic students, higher family income is linked with higher test scores. Hispanic family income is less than $15,000 for 45.9% of students in the lowest quartile and for only 12.2% of students in the highest quartile. Cuban families have the

highest incomes (27.0% in the highest bracket). Puerto Rican students have the highest percentage of families with an income of less than $15,000 (42.9%), compared to 40.5% of Mexican-American families, 19.3% of Cuban families, and 30.8% of other Hispanic families.

Students who live in mother-only families are more likely to live in low-income households (less than $15,000) and living in a single-parent home is often associated with poverty, according to the NELS:88 report. About 37.5% of Hispanic 8th grade students live in families with incomes below $15,000 per year, compared to 21.3% of all 8th graders. The relationship between family income and test scores is clear: as family income decreases, so do test scores. This applies for students of all racial/ethnic groups.

d. Risk factor: Grade Retention

Although most 8th graders were born in 1974, Hispanic students tend to be older, revealing a pattern of being retained in grade. NELS:88 data reveal that 22.6% of Hispanic 8th graders have repeated at least one grade, compared to a national average of 17.7% for all 8th graders. Hispanics are more likely to have repeated two or more grades than any other group except Native Americans; 15.2% of Hispanics and 15.9% of Native Americans have repeated two or more grades, compared to 13.7% of Blacks, 11.5% of Whites, and 7.1% of Asians (See Figure 3.25).

Hispanic females are less likely than males to repeat a grade, but when they do repeat, they are relatively more likely to repeat two or more grades. More than one in four Hispanic male 8th graders (26.9%) has repeated at least one grade, compared to less than one in five Hispanic female students (18.4%).

Grade repetition at the kindergarten level is more prevalent for White and Asian students than for other groups, while Blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians are much more likely than these two groups to repeat 6th, 7th, or 8th grades. Students with high grades, high parental education levels, and high socioeconomic status (SES) are more likely than others to repeat kindergarten. The NELS:88 report notes, in explanation, that repeating kindergarten is most often done for maturational reasons, while repeating upper elementary grades is most often a sign of academic problems.[23]

Data on 8th graders suggest that Hispanics have similar patterns of grade retention in the elementary years, but from 3rd grade on, their rate of grade retention is higher than for the overall student population. The pattern of when grades are repeated indicates a major difference in the reasons behind the delay. Nationally, students who have repeated most often repeat grades one through three: one-quarter of all repeats (25.8%) take place in 1st grade; this pattern is followed by Hispanic students (25.4%).

FIGURE 3.25

8TH GRADERS WHO REPORT REPEATING ONE OR MORE GRADES IN SCHOOL, BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND SEX (PERCENT)

Background Characteristics	REPEATED AT LEAST ONE GRADE	REPEATED 2 OR MORE GRADES
SEX		
Male	21.3	13.3
Female	14.2	11.3
Hispanic Male	26.9	15.2
Hispanic Female	18.4	15.3
RACE/ETHNICITY		
Asian and Pacific Islander	11.5	7.1
Hispanic	22.6	15.2
Black	26.1	13.7
White	15.6	11.5
American Indian and Native Alaskan	29.3	15.9
HISPANIC SUBGROUP		
Mexican/Chicano	23.2	15.0
Cuban	28.2	21.4
Puerto Rican	25.8	18.0
Other Hispanic	18.7	14.0

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey" with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

Cuban students are more likely than other Hispanics to have repeated grades, but do so most often in 2nd and 3rd grade; from 6th grade through 8th, they repeat less frequently (7.1%) than White non-Hispanic students (9.3%).

A high proportion of LEP Hispanic 8th grade students (31.8%) have repeated at least one grade, compared to non-LEP Hispanics (21.9%). This pattern continues to 8th grade, when LEP students are still repeating at a rate of 23.1%: two and a half times the rate

of non-LEP students. NELS:88 did not survey LEP students who had inadequate English proficiency to complete the questionnaire, which was available only in English. As a result, the LEP population represented in the report probably presents an unrealistically bright picture of their school performance as a group.

In future years, the NELS:88 report will be able to assess the extent to which 8th graders with identified risk characteristics such as grade retention do in fact drop out rather than complete high school.

I. Credits Earned and Courses Taken

1. Carnegie Units Earned by High School Graduates

Carnegie units are a standard measure of high school credits earned -- defined in terms of class time and approximately equivalent to one class meeting five times a week for one class period throughout the school year (Kolstad and Thorne). Credits earned are a measure of the quantity of the courses taken, and not the quality of the learning that took place in high school (Kolstad and Thorne). Hispanics are not "double-counted" in the Carnegie unit analyses, so all comparisons are with White non-Hispanics and Black non-Hispanics.

Hispanic and Black high school graduates continue to earn fewer high school credits in all subjects than Whites, as shown in Figures 3.26 and 3.27. Hispanic and Black students earn about the same average number of credits in mathematics and science courses. As of 1987, Hispanics continue to earn fewer credits in history, mathematics and science courses, as in 1982, but earn more credits in English. However, the mean number of credits earned by high school graduates in selected major subjects for Whites, Blacks and Hispanics rose significantly from 1982 to 1987 (See Figure 3.28).[24]

Mathematics and science course-taking patterns for all groups increased from 1982 to 1987 (See Figure 3.29). As of 1987, more than 99% of all three groups of students take some math course, and more than 98% take some science course. However, only 30.2% of Hispanics take Algebra II, compared to 32.4% of Blacks and 51.9% of Whites. The percentage of Hispanics who take Geometry is only 40.2%, compared to 44.0% of Blacks, and 65.1% of Whites. Only 9.9% of Hispanics take Trigonometry, compared to 10.9% of Blacks, and 20.9% of Whites. On the other hand Hispanics (42.5%) and Blacks (46.5%) are more than twice as likely as Whites (20.6%) to take a remedial math course. As in 1982, fewer Hispanics report taking biology, chemistry, physics, and engineering courses. Only 8.2% of Hispanics take classes in biology, chemistry and physics (though this represents an increase from 3.9% in 1982), compared to 8.8% of Blacks, and 17.9% of Whites.

FIGURE 3.27

PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TAKING SELECTED MATH COURSES: 1987

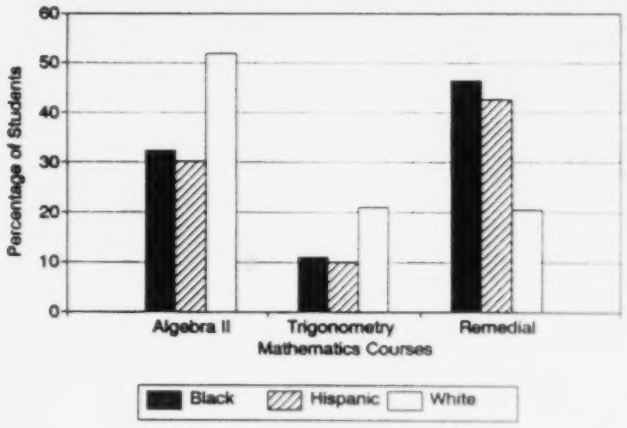


FIGURE 3.27

PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TAKING SELECTED SCIENCE COURSES: 1987

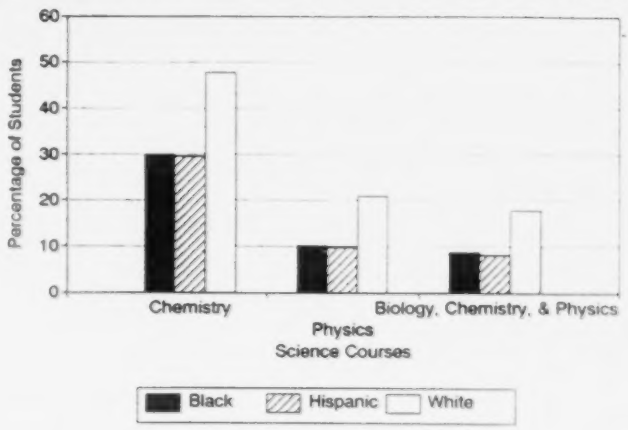


FIGURE 3.28
MEAN NUMBER OF CREDITS EARNED BY HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES IN SELECTED MAJOR SUBJECT FIELDS BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 1987 AND 1982

	1987 Transcript Study			1982 High School & Beyond		
COURSE	White*	Black*	Hispanic	White*	Black*	Hispanic
English	3.99	4.14	4.23	3.78	3.90	3.79
History	1.88	1.88	1.78	1.70	1.64	1.58
Social Studies other than History	1.42	1.43	1.45	1.45	1.33	1.36
Mathematics	2.98	2.90	2.77	2.59	2.44	2.22
Computer Science, Programming, and Data Processing	0.45	0.35	0.36	0.12	0.10	0.07
Science	2.64	2.39	2.33	2.27	1.99	1.79
Foreign Languages	1.50	1.12	1.27	1.13	0.73	0.78

* White non-Hispanic/Black non-Hispanic.
NOTE: Credits are measured in Carnegie units.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, special tabulation prepared under contract by Westat, Inc., Rockville, Maryland, from the 1987 High School Transcript Study and the 1982 transcript component of the High School and Beyond Study.

FIGURE 3.29
PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES TAKING SELECTED MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE COURSES BY RACE AND ETHNICITY, 1987 AND 1982

MATHEMATICS COURSES (Credits)	1987 Transcript Study			1982 HS&B Study		
	White*	Black*	Hispanic	White*	Black*	Hispanic
Any Mathematics (1)	99.3	99.5	99.4	97.7	97.8	95.5
Algebra I (1)	77.7	70.7	73.1	68.1	57.5	55.1
Algebra II (.5)	51.9	32.4	30.2	38.7	24.2	20.8
Geometry (1)	65.1	44.0	40.2	51.2	28.5	25.8
Trigonometry (.5)	20.9	10.9	9.9	13.6	6.0	6.4
Analysis or Pre-Calculus (.5)	13.5	5.1	7.4	6.7	2.2	3.0
Calculus (1)	5.9	2.3	3.6	5.5	1.4	1.8
Any Remedial or Below Grade Math (1)	20.6	46.5	42.5	27.5	53.2	47.0
SCIENCE COURSES (Credits)						
Any Science (1)	98.7	98.7	98.5	95.8	95.4	91.6
Biology (1)	89.2	86.2	85.4	77.3	70.9	67.2
AP/Honors Biology (1)	2.8	1.5	1.6	7.4	4.4	3.2
Chemistry (1)	47.7	29.8	29.4	34.2	20.5	15.4
AP/Honors Chemistry (1)	3.5	1.2	2.3	3.3	1.6	1.4
Physics (1)	20.9	10.1	9.8	16.0	6.9	5.6
AP/Honors Physics (1)	1.7	0.4	0.8	1.2	0.9	0.4
Engineering (1)	0.0	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1
Astronomy (.5)	0.9	0.3	0.8	1.3	0.4	0.5
Geology (.5)	14.4	18.8	11.8	14.8	10.2	11.2
Biology and Chemistry (2)	46.0	28.6	28.2	31.3	18.3	13.9
Biology, Chemistry and Physics (3)	17.9	8.8	8.2	12.1	4.6	3.9

* White non-Hispanic/Black non-Hispanic.
** AP = Advanced Placement, for which college credit may be given based on a test at the end of the year.

NOTE: Credits measured in Carnegie units.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, special tabulation prepared under contract by Westat, Inc., Rockville, Maryland, from the 1987 High School Transcript Study and the 1982 transcript component of the High School and Beyond Study.

2. Course Enrollments of 8th Graders

Course enrollment data for 8th graders from the National Education Longitudinal Study provides additional information on courses taken by Hispanics and by Hispanic subgroups.

a. Mathematics

Hispanic students are the least likely of any group of 8th graders to take advanced math courses and the most likely to take remedial math. Figure 3.30 shows the enrollment patterns in math courses for different groups of students. For regular math courses, there does not appear to be a major difference among student groups. Some Hispanic 8th graders study no mathematics at all: 3.8% compared to 2.0% of White students nationwide. Among subgroups, Cuban students are most likely to take remedial math (14.6%), followed by Puerto Ricans (8.8%) and Mexican Americans (7.3%). A smaller percentage (48.3%) of Cuban students participate in regular math class than students in other Hispanic subgroups, while a relatively high 27.8% of them are enrolled in advanced courses.

FIGURE 3.30
ENROLLMENT OF 8TH GRADERS IN VARIOUS MATH COURSES BY RACE/ETHNICITY (PERCENT)

Background Characteristics	COURSE ENROLLMENT: Advanced Math/ Algebra	Regular Math	Remedial Math	No Math
TOTAL	32.2	58.4	5.2	2.5
RACE/ETHNICITY:				
Hispanic	24.4	61.6	7.8	3.8
Black	26.3	60.5	7.3	3.2
White	33.9	58.5	4.4	2.0
HISPANIC SUBGROUP				
Mexican/Chicano	23.9	63.7	7.3	3.2
Cuban	27.8	48.3	14.6	6.0
Puerto Rican	19.4	62.7	8.8	4.9
Other Hispanic	26.9	58.0	7.8	4.9

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey," with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

b. Science

Hispanic 8th graders more often report taking no science courses at all (8.3%) than do either Blacks (6.0%) or Whites (3.2%). Nationally, 4.4% of all 8th graders take no science. Almost a third (32.5%) of Cuban 8th graders report studying no science. Science enrollment is shown in Figure 3.31, below.

FIGURE 3.31
ENROLLMENT OF 8th GRADERS IN VARIOUS SCIENCE COURSES BY RACE/ETHNICITY (PERCENT)

Background Characteristics	COURSE ENROLLMENT: Science Course with Laboratory	Science Course without Laboratory	No Science
TOTAL	21.5	74.2	4.4
RACE/ETHNICITY:			
Hispanic	19.2	72.5	8.3
Black	19.5	74.4	6.0
White	21.9	74.8	3.2
HISPANIC SUBGROUP			
Mexican/Chicano	19.3	74.5	6.2
Cuban	19.9	47.6	32.5
Puerto Rican	20.0	70.9	9.1
Other Hispanic	18.8	71.9	9.4

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey," with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

c. English

More Hispanic students enroll in remedial English courses than other students, as shown in Figure 3.32. More than three-fourths (76.4%) of Hispanic students enroll in regular English courses, while about one-sixth (17.2%) take remedial English. Nationally, only one in eight (12.1%) of 8th graders takes remedial English. There is considerable variation within the Hispanic population. About a fourth (24.9%) of Cubans take remedial English, the highest percentage of any Hispanic subgroup.

FIGURE 3.32
ENROLLMENT OF 8TH GRADERS IN VARIOUS ENGLISH COURSES BY RACE/ETHNICITY (PERCENT)

Background Characteristics	COURSE ENROLLMENT Regular English	Remedial English 1/	No English
TOTAL	83.7	12.1	4.2
RACE/ETHNICITY:			
Asian and Pacific Islander	81.0	14.6	4.4
Hispanic	76.4	17.2	6.4
Black	80.7	11.3	8.0
White	85.6	11.3	3.1
American Indian and Native Alaskan	74.4	15.4	10.2
HISPANIC SUBGROUP			
Mexican/Chicano	77.1	16.3	6.6
Cuban	68.3	24.9	6.8
Puerto Rican	74.9	17.3	7.8
Other Hispanic	76.1	19.1	4.8

1/ Includes Remedial English alone and Remedial in addition to Regular English

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey," with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

d. Foreign Languages

Only one-fourth of the nation's 8th graders study foreign languages, but Hispanics (19.4%) are less likely to enroll in foreign language courses than either Blacks (21.5%) or Whites (24.7%).

J. Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities contribute to educational experiences, and understanding how students use their out-of-school time can improve understanding of their educational performance. The National Education Longitudinal Study asked 8th graders a number of questions about school-based and non-school-related extracurricular activities.

1. School-Based Extracurricular Activities for 8th Graders

Hispanic 8th graders participate less than other students in school-based extra-curricular activities, as shown in Figure 3.33. Nationally, all students are most likely to participate in varsity sports (47.9%) and intramural sports (42.5%), and in band/orchestra/chorus activities (39.8%). Hispanics participate at lower levels in all extra-curricular activities, but their patterns of participation are generally similar to those for all students. Their highest level of participation is in varsity sports (44.4%) and intramural sports (39.5%) and in band/orchestra/chorus (31.1%); their band participation is considerably below that of both Whites (40.9%) and Blacks (42.2%). While 28.3% of all 8th graders participate in science fairs, the Hispanic participation rate is just 19.7%, considerably below that of Whites (27.9%) and Blacks (33.8%). Among the Hispanic subgroups, Cubans have the highest rate of participation in extra-curricular activities, and Mexican Americans the lowest.

FIGURE 3.33
PARTICIPATION OF 8TH GRADERS IN SCHOOL-BASED EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND GRADE QUARTILE (PERCENT)

Background Characteristics	ACTIVITY School Varsity Sports	Intramural Sports	Band/ Orchestra/ Chorus	Dance/ Drama	Science Fairs	Student Newspaper/ Yearbook
TOTAL	47.9	42.5	39.8	31.4	28.3	21.5
RACE/ETHNICITY						
Asian and Pacific Islander	43.1	47.3	36.5	32.2	29.4	24.7
Hispanic	44.4	39.5	31.1	30.7	22.9	20.5
Black	48.3	45.0	42.2	30.9	33.8	27.5
White	48.4	42.2	40.9	31.5	27.9	20.5
American Indian and Native Alaskan	46.6	44.2	31.4	28.9	31.5	21.0
HISPANIC SUBGROUP						
Mexican/Chicano	44.5	38.9	28.5	28.9	19.7	17.4
Cuban	50.9	48.8	33.8	25.6	22.0	26.2
Puerto Rican	41.1	42.5	36.6	34.4	29.0	27.2
Other Hispanic	45.0	38.6	34.2	34.6	28.4	24.4
HISPANIC GRADE COMPOSITE						
Lowest Quartile	39.2	33.5	26.3	28.8	16.7	17.6
Quartile 2	46.5	42.0	30.0	29.6	23.2	23.3
Quartile 3	43.4	37.6	34.6	30.5	24.3	19.0
Highest Quartile	50.9	47.0	33.9	34.3	29.8	22.3

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey," with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

Students with high grades also tend to be involved in extra-curricular activities, and this relationship holds for Hispanics. Those Hispanic students in the highest grade quartile have the highest level of participation in almost all types of extra-curricular activities, from sports to the student newspaper or yearbook. Extra-curricular activity participation is generally lower among Hispanics in the public schools than among those attending various types of private schools.

2. Activities Outside the School

NELS:88 investigated how 8th graders spend their out-of-school time. Included was whether someone is home when they return from school, information on amount of time spent on homework, television, and reading, involvement in non-school clubs and other activities, and work experience.

a. "Latch-Key" Children

Hispanic 8th graders are less likely than other 8th graders to come home from school to an empty house. They are less likely to be what has been described as "latch-key" children, who must have keys to let themselves into their homes because their parents are both out of the home, usually at work. When asked if there is "usually someone home" when they return from school, 87.6% of Hispanic 8th graders report that there is. Nationally, 82.4% of all 8th graders report that there is usually is someone home when they return from school. Hispanic students are the most likely to say that they never spend time at home without an adult present (20.7%), compared to 16.2% of Black and 11.6% of White students (See Figure 3.34). The reason relatively few Hispanic students return to an empty home may be because fewer Hispanic than Black or White women are in the work force.

Hispanics spend less time at home without an adult present than other students. About half (50.3%) of Hispanic 8th grade students report spending time one hour or more a day at home without an adult, compared to 55.5% of Black and 54.6% of White students. There are slight subgroup differences; Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics are somewhat more likely to be home without an adult than Mexican Americans or Cubans.

In general, the higher the socioeconomic status (SES) and education level of the family, the more likely that students report no one home when they return from school. This pattern holds both in general and for Hispanic students.

FIGURE 3.34
AMOUNT OF TIME 8TH GRADERS SPEND AT HOME AFTER SCHOOL WITH NO ADULT PRESENT (PERCENT)

	None -- Never Happens	Less Than 1 Hour	1-2 Hours	2-3 Hours	More Than 3 Hrs.
TOTAL	13.3	32.4	27.8	12.9	13.6
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian and Pacific Islander	16.7	29.0	25.8	12.6	15.9
Hispanic	20.7	29.0	22.8	11.2	16.3
Black	16.2	28.1	23.2	12.8	19.5
White	11.6	33.8	29.5	13.1	12.0
American Indian/ Native Alaskan	16.0	30.8	21.1	13.3	18.8
HISPANIC SUBGROUP					
Mexican/Chicano	21.4	29.7	21.9	11.4	15.7
Cuban	24.3	28.7	16.8	11.6	18.5
Puerto Rican	20.7	25.0	27.6	10.4	16.3
Other Hispanic	17.9	29.5	24.4	11.7	16.6

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey," with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

b. Use of Non-School Time

The National Education Longitudinal Study asked 8th graders how they spend their out-of-school time. Hours spent doing homework, outside reading, and watching television were investigated (See Figure 3.35).

All 8th graders, including Hispanics, report very large amounts of time spent in watching television. Hispanic students spend an average of 22.6 hours per week watching television: almost five times as much as the time spent on homework (4.7 hours) and 14 times as much as on outside reading (1.6 hours). Overall, the nation's 8th graders report an average of 21.4 hours a week spent watching television, compared with 5.6 hours a week spent doing homework and 1.8 hours spent on non-assigned or outside reading. No

racial/ethnic group spends as much as two hours a week on outside reading. Black students average more television viewing time per week (27.6 hours) than their peers, while Asians average one hour more of homework a week than any other ethnic group. Female Hispanic 8th grade students follow the national pattern for all students of spending a little more time on outside reading and less time watching television than their male counterparts.

FIGURE 3.35
TIME SPENT ON OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES BY 8TH GRADERS BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND SEX (AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS PER WEEK)

Student Characteristics	Average Hours Spent Per Week: Outside Reading	Home-Work	Tele-vision
TOTAL	1.8	5.6	21.4
SEX			
Male	1.5	5.4	22.3
Female	2.1	5.7	21.2
Hispanic Male	1.4	4.7	23.2
Hispanic Female	1.7	4.7	22.0
RACE/ETHNICITY			
Asian and Pacific Islander	1.9	6.7	21.4
Hispanic	1.6	4.7	22.6
Black	1.6	5.2	27.6
White	1.9	5.7	20.8
American Indian and Native Alaskan	1.7	4.7	23.3
HISPANIC SUBGROUP			
Mexican/Chicano	1.5	4.5	22.1
Cuban	1.7	6.7	22.2
Puerto Rican	1.6	4.6	25.7
Other Hispanic	1.7	5.2	22.5

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey" with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

Hispanic students average less time spent on homework than Blacks or Whites. Among Hispanics, Cubans spend the most time on homework -- 6.7 hours, the same amount of time as Asians. Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans both spend less than five hours a week on homework; Puerto Ricans spend the most time watching television (25.7 hours).

High levels of outside reading and hours spent on homework, together with fewer hours of television viewing, correlate directly with higher test scores. Eighth graders with test scores in the highest quartile tend to spend more time doing homework and reading and less time watching television than those with lower scores.

c. Participation in Clubs and Activities

A majority of Hispanic 8th graders are involved in outside activities, although Hispanic are less likely than White or Black 8th graders in general to participate in such activities. About three-fifths of Hispanics (60.3%) are involved in outside activities, as are nearly two-thirds of Blacks (65.6%) and three-fourths of Whites (74.4%). Cubans participate more than other groups of Hispanics (73.0%) and Mexicans less (58.0%) (See Figure 3.36).

FIGURE 3.36
PARTICIPATION BY 8TH GRADERS IN OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES, BY RACE/ETHNICITY (PERCENT)

Background Characteristics	Any Outside School Activity	Scouting	Boys' or Girls' Clubs	'Y' or other Youth Group	4-H	Religious Youth Group	Hobby Clubs	Neighborhood Clubs	Summer Program	Non-School Team Sports
TOTAL	71.3	14.2	10.7	15.3	9.3	33.8	15.5	12.7	19.2	37.3
RACE/ETHNICITY										
Hispanic	60.3	10.9	13.2	13.9	6.1	24.6	15.5	13.3	19.5	31.3
Black	65.6	20.0	23.7	23.0	13.8	30.0	22.4	23.4	29.6	33.9
White	74.4	13.7	8.1	14.3	9.1	36.6	14.1	10.7	17.1	39.1
HISPANIC SUBGROUP										
Mexican/Chicano	58.0	9.4	12.0	12.7	5.9	24.0	13.3	10.8	17.2	30.7
Cuban	73.0	12.1	7.0	13.8	1.8	25.1	20.6	14.5	24.3	25.0
Puerto Rican	60.0	10.0	18.8	19.0	6.3	19.1	17.3	20.9	24.7	27.9
Other Hispanic	64.6	14.6	14.0	14.6	6.6	28.3	18.8	16.7	21.9	35.3

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey" with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

d. Employment Experience

NELS:88 asked 8th graders about their work experience. Since most 8th graders are under 16 and some are under 14, they may not qualify for jobs with most formal employers. However, they may have the opportunity to earn money, formally or informally, through a variety of jobs.

Hispanic 8th graders are more likely than 8th graders in general to report that they have never worked for pay; about one out of three Hispanics (31.8%) have never worked, compared to one out of six Whites (16.0%) and one out of four Blacks (25.4%) (See Figure 3.37). White 8th graders are most likely to have worked for pay, and are especially likely to have earned money baby-sitting (35.0%) or doing lawn work (15.9%). Black 8th graders are especially likely to report baby-sitting (28.4%), waiting on tables or doing odd jobs (18.9%) or doing lawn work (14.0%).

Hispanic students who have worked most often have done baby-sitting (24.3%) or have worked waiting tables or doing odd jobs (17.9%). Among Hispanics, Cuban students are most likely never to have worked for pay (42.4%), compared to 37.2% of Puerto Ricans, 32.5% of other Hispanic and 30.3% of Mexican Americans.

FIGURE 3.37
WORK FOR PAY AMONG 8TH GRADERS
BY RACE/ETHNICITY
(PERCENT)

Background Characteristics	Have Not Worked for pay	Lawn work	Waiter/ odd jobs	Newspaper route	Baby sitting	Farm/ manual labor	Clerk/ sales office
TOTAL	19.6	14.7	16.1	5.4	32.5	8.5	3.2
RACE/ETHNICITY							
Asian and Pacific Islander	35.3	9.2	17.0	5.0	22.8	5.4	5.4
Hispanic	31.8	9.8	17.9	4.5	24.3	6.6	5.1
Black	25.4	14.0	18.9	4.4	28.4	4.4	4.5
White	16.0	15.9	15.1	5.8	35.0	9.6	2.6
American Indian and Native Alaskan	18.9	13.3	21.2	5.5	30.6	7.1	3.4
HISPANIC SUBGROUP							
Mexican/Chicano	30.3	11.2	18.5	3.8	24.8	6.9	4.6
Cuban	42.4	11.0	17.9	0.9	18.3	2.7	6.8
Puerto Rican	37.2	8.0	15.4	6.7	21.2	4.5	7.1
Other Hispanic	32.5	6.4	17.6	5.9	24.9	7.1	5.7

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey," with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

K. School Climate

The National Education Longitudinal Survey includes questions about school climate, including 8th graders' satisfaction with such factors as the quality of teaching, fairness of discipline, and school security.

Hispanic 8th graders express little dissatisfaction with their schools or their teachers. They are more likely than Black or White students to rate the teaching as good (81.3%) and the discipline as fair (70.7%), and report that the teachers are interested in the students (76.8%).

Most Hispanic students (70.6%) report that their teachers "really listen to me"; they are more satisfied with their teachers than White students (67.%) and less than Black students (73.3%). In reporting whether studentsand teachers get along, two-thirds of Hispanic students (66.4%) say they do, a higher percentage than Black students (60.5%) and lower than White students (68.2%). As might be expected, students with lower grades and/or with poor attendance records give lower ratings to their teachers than do other students.

Hispanics are more likely than other 8th graders to report being approached to buy drugs; one-seventh of Hispanics (14.3%) report drug contacts, compared to less than one-twelfth of Black (7.6%) and one-tenth of White (9.9%) students. Drug contacts more often happen to Hispanic males (16.5%) than to females (12.0%). The subgroup most likely to report that "someone offered to sell me drugs" is Mexican Americans (16.7%), who are more than twice as likely as Puerto Ricans (6.9%) to report such contacts.

Security is a problem for Hispanics. Almost half of the Hispanic students (49.2%) report having something stolen from them at school, a rate similar to White students (47.6%) but lower than Black students (57.5%). Among Hispanics, Puerto Rican students are most likely to report feeling unsafe at school (20.9%) and Cubans least likely (13.4%). More than a quarter (25.3%) of all Hispanic students report getting into a fight with another student. Black students more often report fighting (30.3%) and White students less often (20.6%). Puerto Ricans are most likely to be involved in a fight (30.2%) and Cubans least likely (18.7%).

The highest levels of these security-related problems are reported in the public schools. Although students in rural schools report less fear about their safety and less availability of drugs, they are more likely to report fighting and theft than are students in urban schools.

L. *Educational Expectations*

A considerable amount of research has been done around the question of the relationship of educational aspirations (desires), expectations (realistic intentions), and actual outcomes. Past studies have often found that Hispanics have high educational aspirations but lower expectations -- and even lower educational attainment. The National Education Longitudinal Study asked 8th graders what level of education they expect to achieve. Responses are shown in Figure 3.38.

FIGURE 3.38
EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS OF 8TH GRADERS
BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND SEX
(PERCENT)

	EXPECTED EDUCATIONAL LEVEL					
Student Characteristics	Won't Finish High School	Will Finish High School	Vocational, Trade, Business	Will Attend College	Will Finish College	Will Attend Graduate School
TOTAL	1.5	10.5	9.4	13.1	42.8	22.7
SEX						
All Male	1.8	12.1	10.1	13.3	42.5	20.2
All Female	1.1	9.0	8.7	13.0	43.1	25.2
Hispanic Male	3.0	17.3	9.8	16.5	34.5	18.8
Hispanic Female	2.3	12.3	11.6	17.8	31.9	24.2
RACE/ETHNICITY						
Asian and Pacific Islander	1.5	5.8	4.9	12.1	37.4	38.2
Hispanic	2.6	14.8	10.7	17.1	33.2	21.5
Black	1.4	8.2	10.2	16.3	39.4	24.5
White	1.3	10.4	9.2	11.9	45.2	21.9
American Indian and Native Alaskan	3.2	16.0	13.8	16.5	33.9	16.7
HISPANIC SUBGROUP						
Mexican/Chicano	3.0	17.0	11.3	18.7	31.1	18.9
Cuban	0.1	7.8	5.4	13.9	32.0	40.7
Puerto Rican	2.0	12.7	14.7	17.1	36.0	17.5
Other Hispanic	2.3	11.2	7.9	13.2	37.5	27.9

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: Base Year Student Survey," with additional data prepared for NCLR on Hispanic populations.

Hispanic 8th graders' educational expectations are lower than those of other students; they have lower overall educational expectations and are less sure of graduating from high school than any other group. Just 70.6% are "very sure" they will graduate from high school, compared to 81.5% of Black students and 85.0% of White students. This relative lack of certainty holds regardless of parental education or income level. Mexican American students are least sure about graduation (67.1%) and Cuban students most sure (80.9%). These expectations are consistent with actual graduation rates.

Hispanic students also express the lowest expectation of finishing college of any group (33.2%) and are second lowest in expecting graduate training (21.5%). A little more than half (54.7%) of Hispanic 8th graders believe they will either finish college or do graduate work; comparable figures are nearly two-thirds (63.9%) of Blacks and more than two-thirds (67.1%) of Whites.

There are small differences in educational expectations by sex. Like all females, Hispanic female 8th graders are slightly more likely than males to expect to attend graduate school. A total of 73.9% of Hispanic females expect to attend college, complete college, or attend graduate school, compared to 69.8% of Hispanic males.

Although the expectations of Hispanic 8th graders are much lower than those of Blacks or Whites, they are well above the actual educational attainment levels of Hispanics; less than three in five Hispanics graduate from high school, and only about one in ten completes college.

M. High School Completion and Graduation Rates

Hispanics continue to have the lowest high school completion rates of any major population group, and the gap between Hispanics and other Americans, both Black and White, continues to grow. The proportion of Whites 18-24 years old, who have completed high school -- that is, having completed 12 years of high school and left with a diploma or its equivalent -- has remained steady at about 82% from 1978 to 1988. The Black high school completion rate has increased from 67% in 1978 to 75% in 1988. However, the Hispanic high school completion rate as of 1988 is only 55%.[25]

Hispanic students at all economic levels have lower high school completion rates than Whites or Blacks. However, the gap in high school completion rates is even higher for low- and middle-income Hispanics. Female students at all economic levels have higher high school completion rates than their male counterparts. This holds true for Hispanics as well, as shown in Figure 3.39.[26]

Hispanics of all subgroups have lower high school completion rates than non-Hispanics. According to the March 1989 Current Population Survey, 76.9% of the total U.S. population 25 and over are high school graduates, compared to 50.9% of Hispanics.

Figure 3.40 provides subgroup data for 25-34 year-olds which show that Mexican Americans have by far the lowest high school completion rate of any Hispanic group.[27]

Not only are Hispanic high school completion rates lower than for other groups, but also, because Hispanics leave school at earlier ages, they complete fewer years of school than other dropouts.

FIGURE 3.39

TRENDS IN H.S. COMPLETION RATES FOR 18-24 YEAR-OLD HISPANICS, BY GENDER

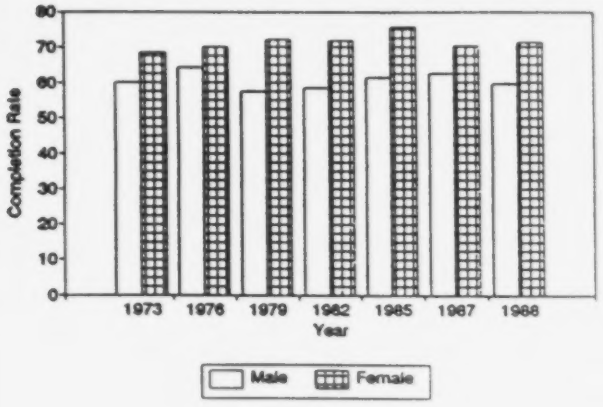
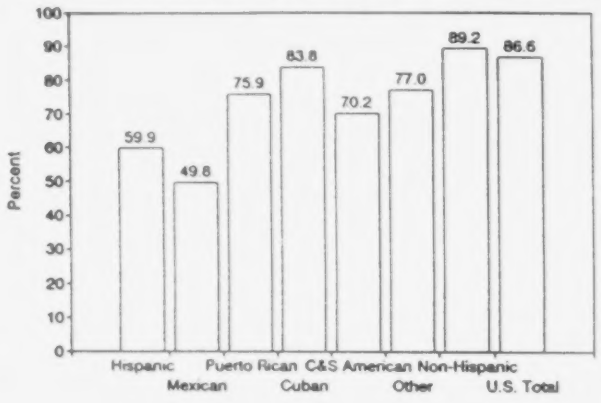


FIGURE 3.40

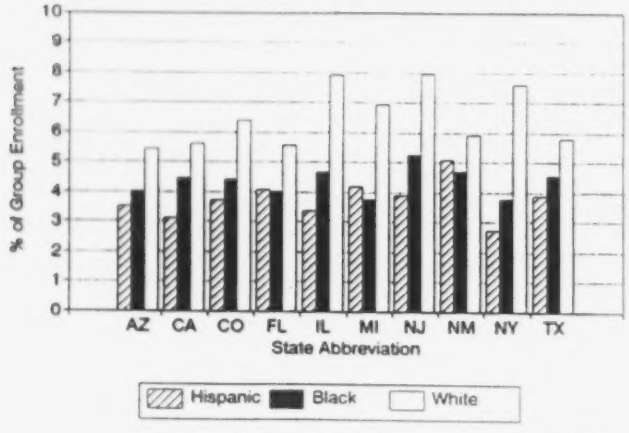
COMPLETION OF HIGH SCHOOL BY HISPANICS COMPARATIVE RATES AS OF MARCH 1989



School enrollments and graduation numbers are reported by the Office for Civil Rights from its biennial surveys. Figure 3.41 below shows the 1980 and 1986 figures for the ten states with the largest numbers of Hispanic students.[28]

FIGURE 3.41

PERCENT GRADUATION AS PROPORTION OF RACE/ETHNIC GROUP: 1986



One indicator of dropping out, or of not completing secondary school, is the graduation rate for students in a specific group as a percentage of the school enrollment size of that group. The expected graduation rate would be roughly comparable to one out of twelve years (kindergarten plus 11 grades), or 8.3%. This percentage does not take into account in- and out-of state moves or different sizes of age groups in the various populations, but provides useful comparisons by group and over time.

In the case of Hispanic students, the percent of graduating students averaged 4.3% in 1980 and fell to 3.7% in 1986; in comparison, White students had a graduation rate averaging 7.7% in 1980 and 6.5% in 1986. Black students also had a higher graduation rate than Hispanic students, averaging 4.8% in 1980 and 4.4% in 1986. Graduation percentages for all three groups declined between 1980 and 1986. For minorities especially, this may reflect the growing enrollment in the lower grades due to population increases.

FIGURE 3.42
GRADUATION RATES BY RACE/ETHNICITY
1980 AND 1986
(PERCENT)

State	Year	Total Enrollment	Graduation Rates Hisp.	Black	White
Arizona	1980	481,939	4.5	4.5	7.2
	1986	586,583	3.5	4.0	5.4
California	1980	3,954,646	3.9	5.1	7.6
	1986	5,028,304	3.1	4.5	5.6
Colorado	1980	550,463	4.8	4.7	7.3
	1986	622,285	3.7	4.4	6.4
Florida	1980	1,488,341	4.9	4.4	6.4
	1986	1,576,212	4.1	4.0	5.5
Illinois	1980	1,929,850	3.1	4.2	8.4
	1986	1,713,625	3.3	4.7	7.9
Michigan	1980	1,759,416	4.4	4.1	7.8
	1986	1,626,732	4.2	3.8	6.9
New Jersey	1980	1,223,898	4.2	5.1	8.9
	1986	1,234,431	3.9	5.3	7.9
New Mexico	1980	270,301	6.3	6.1	7.6
	1986	286,055	5.1	4.7	5.9
New York	1980	2,712,949	3.0	4.4	8.3
	1986	3,138,207	2.7	3.8	7.6
Texas	1980	2,846,126	4.2	5.3	7.1
	1986	3,342,108	3.9	4.5	5.8

By any available measure, Hispanics nationwide have the lowest high school completion rates of any major population group.

CHAPTER 4. PORTRAIT: ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Teachers have a strong influence on students' educational opportunities and success. Some studies have indicated that, given low parental education levels among Hispanics, teachers, and other school personnel play a particularly important role in informing Hispanic students about educational opportunities and motivating them to pursue educational goals. Hispanic teachers, especially, are seen as potential role models for students.

This section provides information on American public- and private-school teachers at the elementary and secondary levels, including their race/ethnicity, age, qualifications, salaries, and years of teaching experience. The teacher profile comes from the 1987-88 School and Staffing Survey (SASS), commissioned by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the U.S. Department of Education, and conducted by the Bureau of the Census.[1] SASS also includes some supplementary data collected at the request of the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA).

The information was collected from a sample of 56,242 public- and 11,529 private-school teachers at 9,317 public and 3,513 private elementary and secondary schools across the nation in the 1987-88 school year. These figures apply to classroom teachers only, and not to administrative personnel. SASS provides a snapshot of teachers in the 1987-1988 school year and will provide continuing information about teacher supply and demand through a longitudinal component.

In reviewing SASS data, it is important to be familiar with the race/ethnic classification system used. SASS asked teachers to classify themselves by race, as: (1) American Indian, Aleutian, or Eskimo; (2) Asian or Pacific Islander; (3) Black; or (4) White. A separate question asked that they indicate whether or not they are of Hispanic origin.

To avoid having Hispanic teachers counted twice -- once as Hispanic and once in a racial group -- Hispanics were removed from the racial groups in the analysis. Thus all comparisons in this section are of Hispanic, non-Hispanic White, and non-Hispanic Black teachers.

A. Characteristics of Teachers

Less than 3% of the nation's elementary and secondary school teachers are Hispanic. Of the estimated 2,323,204 public-school and 307,131 private-school teachers in the U.S., only 2.9% report Hispanic as their ethnic origin: 2.9% of public-school teachers and 2.8% of private-school teachers. Approximately 7.7% of all teachers in public schools are Black and 85.0% are White. In private schools, about 2.1% of all teachers are Black and 90.7% are White. Asians and Native Americans each make up about 1% of the teaching force in both public and private schools (See Figure 4.1).

FIGURE 4.1
COMPOSITION OF THE U.S. ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHING FORCE, 1987-88

	TOTAL	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC
TOTAL				
Number	2,630,335	2,252,288	185,890	75,653
Percent	100	85.6	7.1	2.9
PUBLIC SCHOOLS				
Number	2,323,204	1,973,584	179,372	67,084
Percent	100	85.0	7.7	2.9
PRIVATE SCHOOLS				
Number	307,131	278,704	6,518	8,569
Percent	100	90.7	2.1	2.8

NOTE: Racial/ethnic breakdowns do not add to total number of teachers because a large number of teachers did not respond to the question on race/ethnicity.

Source: Preliminary analyses from the School and Staffing Survey prepared for NCLR by the National Center for Education Statistics.

As a group, U.S. elementary and secondary school teachers are considerably less diverse than the students they teach, as shown in the pie charts below. The first pie chart shows that Hispanics make up 9.6% of the students enrolled in grades K-12;[2] the second shows that they represent only about 3.0% of the K-12 teaching force (See Figures 4.2 and 4.3).

As role models for Hispanic students, Hispanic teachers are in short supply. Proportionately, there are three times as many Hispanic students in U.S. schools as there are Hispanic teachers. Hispanic students as counted in Census data make up about 9.6% of elementary and secondary school students, but less than 3.0% of teachers. The proportion of Black students (14.8%) to Black teachers (7.4%) is about two to one.

Another way to look at the underrepresentation of Hispanic and Black teachers is to determine the ratio of students to teachers of the same racial/ethnic group. For the estimated 38,299,000 white students ages three to 19 years old, the non-Hispanic student to non-Hispanic teacher ratio is about 17 to 1. For the estimated 4,885,000 Hispanic school-age children, the Hispanic teacher to Hispanic student ratio is about 64 to 1. The ratio of school-age Black children to Black teachers is about 40 to 1.

FIGURE 4.2

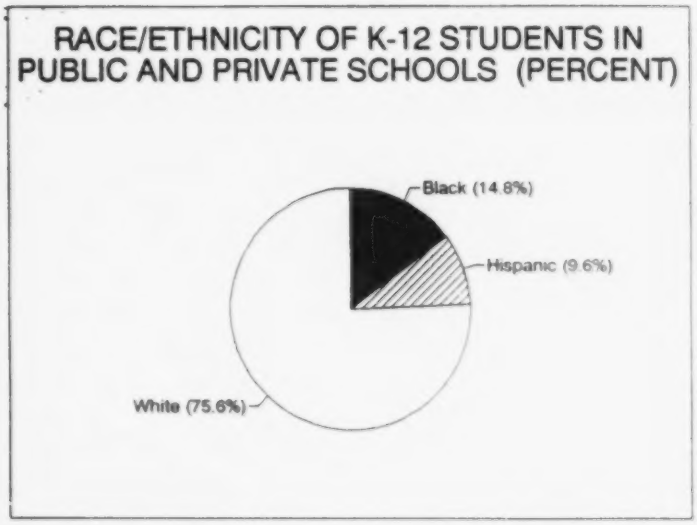
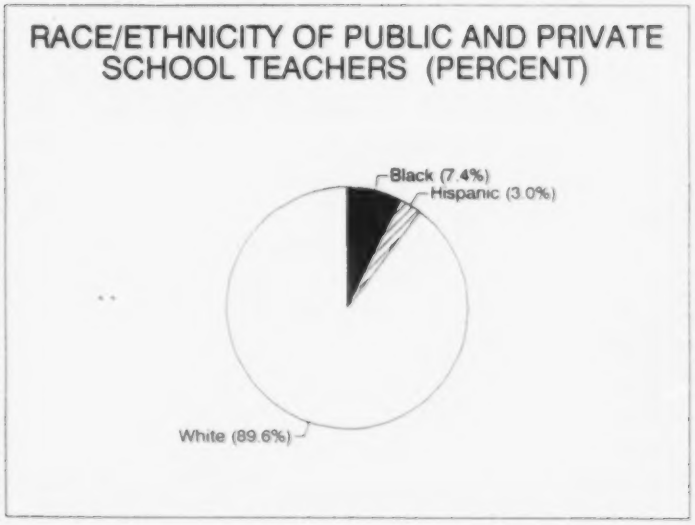


FIGURE 4.3



B. Public-School Teacher Profiles

The great majority -- more than seven-eighths -- of elementary and secondary school teachers in the U.S. work in the public schools. The 2,323,204 public elementary and secondary school teachers in the United States represent 88.3% of all elementary and secondary school teachers.

Most public elementary and secondary school teachers are women. About 70% of Hispanic and White teachers are female, as are almost 80% of Black teachers, as shown in Figure 4.4.

Hispanic public school teachers tend to be somewhat younger than Black or White teachers. More than one-sixth (18.2%) of Hispanic teachers are under 30 years old, compared to less than one-twelfth (7.8%) of Black and one-seventh (14.0%) of White teachers.

Hispanic public-school teachers tend to teach in the elementary grades; 58.0% teach in the elementary grades, compared to 50.2% of White teachers and 55.4% of Black teachers.

FIGURE 4.4
CHARACTERISTICS OF PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS (PERCENT)

	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC
NUMBER OF TEACHERS	1,973,584	179,372	67,084
PERCENT			
GENDER			
Male	30.1	20.8	29.5
Female	69.8	79.0	70.3
AGE			
Less than 30	14.0	7.8	18.2
30 to 39	35.1	36.3	41.6
40 to 49	32.7	32.1	23.0
50 or more	17.5	21.5	16.7
LEVEL			
Elementary	50.2	55.4	58.0
Secondary	49.8	44.6	42.0

Source: Preliminary analyses from the School and Staffing Survey prepared for NCLR by the National Center for Education Statistics.

C. Private-School Teacher Profiles

Private-school teachers comprise less than one-eighth of the teaching force; 11.7% of the nation's elementary and secondary school teachers in the U.S. teach in private schools, including parochial schools. There are approximately 307,131 private-school teachers; about 8,569 or 2.8% of them are Hispanic.

Like public-school teachers, most private-school teachers are female; the percentage of Hispanic teachers who are women is higher than in the public schools. Almost 80% of Hispanic private-school teachers are female, compared to about 70% of Hispanic public-school teachers. The statistics are similar for White teachers. The proportions are reversed for Blacks; 72.6% of Black private-school teachers are female, as are nearly 80% of Black public-school teachers. (See Figure 4.5).

FIGURE 4.5
CHARACTERISTICS OF PRIVATE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS (PERCENT)

	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC
NUMBER OF TEACHERS	78,704	6,518	8,569
PERCENT			
GENDER			
Male	21.5	27.4	20.4
Female	78.5	72.6	79.6
AGE			
Less than 30	21.9	25.5	18.2
30 to 39	33.9	41.3	39.6
40 to 49	27.8	21.0	22.9
50 or more	15.7	10.7	19.1
LEVEL			
Elementary	52.1	69.0	41.7
Secondary	47.9	31.0	58.3

Source: Preliminary analyses from the School and Staffing Survey prepared for NCLR by the National Center for Education Statistics.

Overall, private-school teachers tend to be younger than public-school teachers, although the age distribution for Hispanics is similar for both sets of institutions.

A majority of Hispanic private-school teachers work at the secondary level, while more Black and White private-school teachers work at the elementary level. About 58.3% of Hispanic private-school teachers work at the secondary level, compared to 31.0% of Black and 47.9% of White teachers.

D. Teacher Credentials

Hispanic teachers are less likely than Whites or Blacks to hold degrees above the Bachelor's. Overall, public-school teachers are more likely than private-school teachers to hold Master's degrees; only 29.6% of Hispanic public-school teachers hold a Master's degree,

compared to 42.4% of Black and 40.1% of White public-school teachers. The highest degree held is the Bachelor's for approximately 60.9% of Hispanic public-school teachers, compared to 49.9% of Black and 52.3% of White teachers (See Figure 4.6).

In private schools, 19.7% of Hispanics, just 15.8% of Blacks, and 30.2% of Whites hold Master's degrees; 60.8% of Hispanics, 71.7% of Blacks, and 61.3% of Whites hold only a Bachelor's degree.

FIGURE 4.6
HIGHEST DEGREE HELD
BY PUBLIC- AND PRIVATE-SCHOOL TEACHERS
(PERCENT)

	None	Assoc.	Bach.	Master's	Ed. Spec.	Doctoral
PUBLIC SCHOOLS						
White	0.2	0.4	52.3	40.1	6.2	0.8
Black	0.1	0.4	49.9	42.4	5.7	1.4
Hispanic	0.2	0.8	60.9	29.6	6.7	1.8
PRIVATE SCHOOLS						
White	2.8	1.3	61.3	30.2	2.8	1.6
Black	2.0	3.0	71.7	15.8	3.5	4.0
Hispanic	5.7	6.4	60.8	19.7	6.5	0.8

Source: Schools and Staffing Survey, 1988.

The percentage of Hispanics holding special advanced education degrees and doctoral degrees in the public schools is slightly higher than for Whites or Blacks; 6.7% of Hispanics compared to 6.2% of Whites and 5.7% of Blacks hold special advanced degrees in education. As for doctorates, 1.8% of Hispanic, 1.4% of Black, and 0.8% of White public-school teachers hold such degrees (See Figure 4.7).

Hispanic private-school teachers are more likely to hold special education degrees than Blacks or Whites, but less likely to have a doctorate (See Figure 4.8).

FIGURE 4.7

CREDENTIALS OF
PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

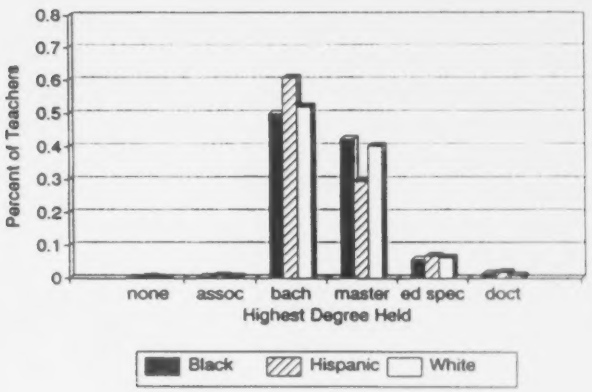
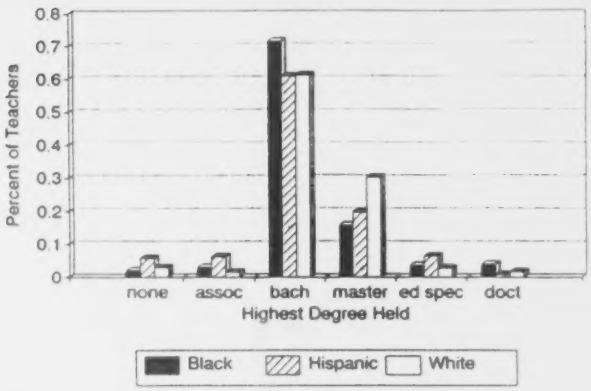


FIGURE 4.8

CREDENTIALS OF
PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHERS



E. Years of Teaching Experience

Hispanic public-school teachers are somewhat younger than their Black or White non-Hispanic peers, and so their teaching experience is somewhat less (See Figure 4.9). About 11.9% of Hispanic public-school teachers, compared to 6.0% of Blacks and 8.1% of Whites, have three or less years of experience (See Figure 4.10). Hispanics in the public schools are considerably less likely than Whites or Blacks to have 21 or more years of teaching experience; less than one-seventh (13.9%) of Hispanics have that level of experience, compared to about one-fifth (20.8%) of Whites and more than one-fourth (27.4%) of Blacks.

Private-school teachers overall have less teaching experience than public-school teachers. A majority of public-school teachers of all three racial/ethnic groups have at least 10 years of experience, but this is not true for any of the three groups of private-school teachers. Black and Hispanic private-school teachers are less likely than Whites to have 21 or more years of experience (See Figure 4.11).

FIGURE 4.9
YEARS OF FULL-TIME EXPERIENCE FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS (PERCENT)

	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE			
	< 3	3-9	10-20	21 +
PUBLIC				
White	8.1	26.6	44.4	20.8
Black	6.0	19.9	46.6	27.4
Hispanic	11.9	33.2	40.9	13.9
PRIVATE				
White	18.4	37.4	29.9	13.6
Black	26.4	44.0	21.3	7.3
Hispanic	21.3	40.2	25.0	10.5

Source: Schools and Staffing Survey, 1988.

Private-school teachers are somewhat younger than public-school teachers. However, in private schools, Hispanics are older than their White or Black peers. In public schools, however, Hispanic teachers tend to be younger than their peers.

FIGURE 4.10

YEARS FULL-TIME EXPERIENCE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

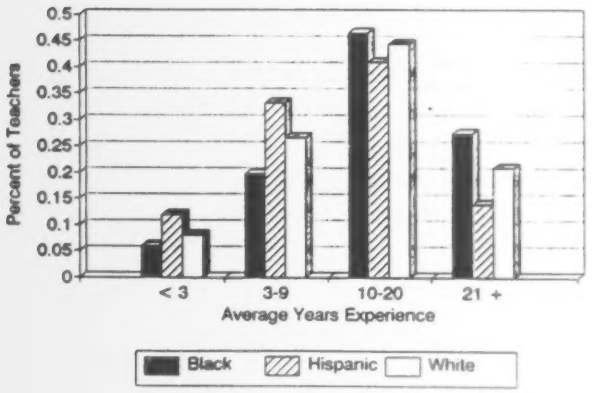
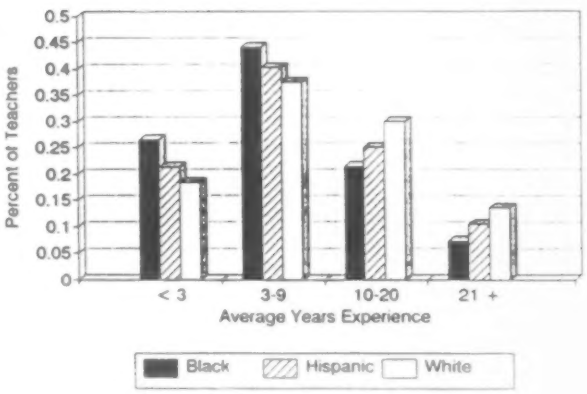


FIGURE 4.11

YEARS FULL-TIME EXPERIENCE FOR PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHERS

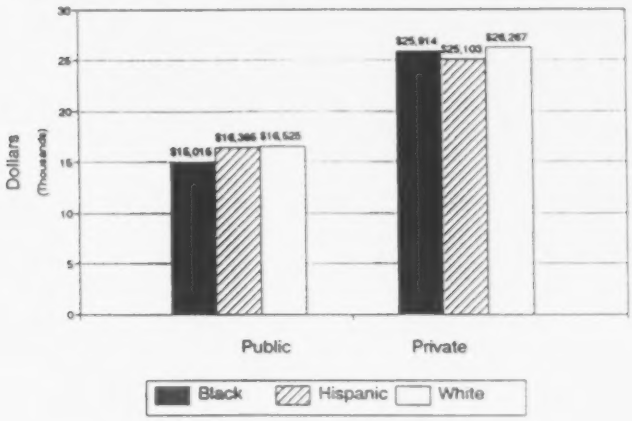


F. Teacher Salaries

Teacher salaries are considerably higher in public than in private schools, but Hispanic teachers earn less, on average, than either Black or White public-school teachers (See Figure 4.12). Hispanic public-school teachers earn an average base salary of $25,103, compared with $25,914 for Black and $26,267 for White teachers. The salary differentials may reflect the fact that Hispanic teachers tend to be younger and are less likely to hold advanced degrees than other teachers.

FIGURE 4.12

BASE ANNUAL SALARY FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHERS



Hispanic teachers in private schools earn much less than in the public schools, with an average salary of $16,385. However, their average base salary falls between that of Black teachers ($15,015) and White teachers ($16,525).

G. Bilingual Education and English-as-a-Second-Language Teachers

Hispanics account for 13.8% of all bilingual education teachers, according to preliminary SASS figures.[3] Hispanic teachers make up 9.6% of the private secondary school bilingual education teaching staff. About one-sixth (17.0%) of public-school bilingual education teachers at the elementary level are Hispanic, as are less than one-seventh (13.6%) of bilingual education teachers at the secondary level.

Public schools are far more likely than private schools to offer bilingual education and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) instruction. One in every five public schools offers bilingual education and more than one in three offers ESL. SASS found that 15,738 of the nation's 78,561 public schools provide a bilingual education program and 27,014 schools provide ESL. In comparison, only about one in 15 (1,784) of the nation's 26,807 private schools offers bilingual education and one in 11 (2,541) provides ESL.

Bilingual education and ESL teachers tend to have a good deal of teaching experience, as shown in Figure 4.13. All bilingual education teachers average 13.8 years of full-time experience, compared to 10.6 years for ESL teachers.

FIGURE 4.13
MEAN YEARS OF FULL-TIME TEACHING EXPERIENCE FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND ESL TEACHERS, OVERALL AND AT THEIR CURRENT SCHOOL

	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE			
	TOTAL		AT CURRENT SCHOOL	
	Bilingual Teachers	ESL Teachers	Bilingual Teachers	ESL Teachers
All teachers	13.8	10.6	9.0	6.1
SEX				
Male	16.1	11.1	11.0	6.5
Female	11.9	10.3	7.4	6.0
RACE/ETHNIC GROUP				
Black	14.3	*	8.0	*
White	13.9	10.7	9.3	6.2
Hispanic	10.4	11.4	6.7	6.0

* Cell size too small (n < 20) for statistical validity.

Source: Special tabulations prepared from the School and Staffing Survey, 1988.

Bilingual and ESL teachers differ only slightly with respect to degrees or certificates held, with ESL teachers more likely to have a Master's degree. Figure 4.14 shows degrees or certifications held.

FIGURE 4.14
HIGHEST DEGREE OR CREDENTIAL HELD BY BILINGUAL AND ESL TEACHERS
1987-88
(PERCENT)

	None	Assoc.	Bach.	Master's	Ed. Spec.	Doctoral
TEACHER GROUP						
Bilingual Education	0.8	1.0	50.6	38.1	7.0	2.0
English-as-a-Second Language	---	---	45.2	46.6	6.4	1.7

H. Implications

The preliminary SASS data show that Hispanics are seriously underrepresented as teachers, both at the elementary and secondary level, in both public and private schools. The relatively young average age of Hispanic teachers suggests some increases in the Hispanic teaching force, but does not suggest major increases in Hispanic representation in the teaching force.

The SASS data do not provide information on Hispanic representation in educational administration. Nor do they indicate the extent to which non-Hispanic teachers are prepared to provide culturally sensitive, appropriate education to Hispanic children and youth. Given the lack of Hispanic role models, the ability of non-Hispanic teachers to effectively serve Hispanic students becomes extremely important.

CHAPTER 5. SNAPSHOT: POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

A. Overview

Hispanics enter and graduate from college at lower rates than Whites or Blacks. Given high Hispanic dropout rates, this is not surprising. However, even among Hispanic high school graduates, college enrollment is lower than for the other major population groups. The gap between Whites and Hispanics is wide and growing. This chapter summarizes Hispanic participation in and completion of postsecondary education programs.

Hispanic higher education enrollment is low and Hispanic students tend to enroll at two-year colleges and other schools not offering advanced degrees. In 1986, about 78% of students enrolled in U.S. colleges were White, 9% were Black, 7% were Hispanic, 5% were Asian, and 1% were Native American. These percentages varied considerably by type of institution -- Hispanic students, for example, were 15% of the student population at less-than-two-year institutions, but only 4% of the enrollment at four-year, Ph.D-granting institutions.

Postsecondary courses and areas of study also vary by student group. For example, relative to other groups, Hispanic students are the least likely to enter Education/Public Service programs (8.6%), and the most likely to enter Letters/Language programs (3.0%).

One of the factors discouraging Hispanic enrollment in higher education is the cost of education and the relatively low incomes of Hispanic families. Compared to Whites and Blacks, Hispanic students rely less on grants, and more on student loans at larger average loan amounts, in financing their postsecondary education.

B. SAT Scores

Although the greatest improvement in college admissions scores over the past decade has occurred for minorities, the scores for Hispanic students are still low and make college admission difficult. Moreover, the gains in scores have not been accompanied by gains in enrollment or college degree attainment.

Hispanic and other minority students do not perform as well as Whites and Asian American students on standardized tests. The College Board Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) math and verbal score trends for minority students are shown in Figures 5.1 and 5.2.[1] The gap in math SAT scores for White and Asian students versus Mexican American, Puerto Rican, and Black students remains large. Test scores for all groups, however, have remained steady throughout the 1980s. Verbal SAT scores are much higher for White students than any

other group, including Asian students. Asian students' verbal scores are slightly higher than those of Mexican American, Puerto Rican and Black students, but considerably lower than those of Whites.

FIGURE 5.1

AVERAGE MATH SCORES BY RACE/ETHNIC GROUP: 1980 TO 1989

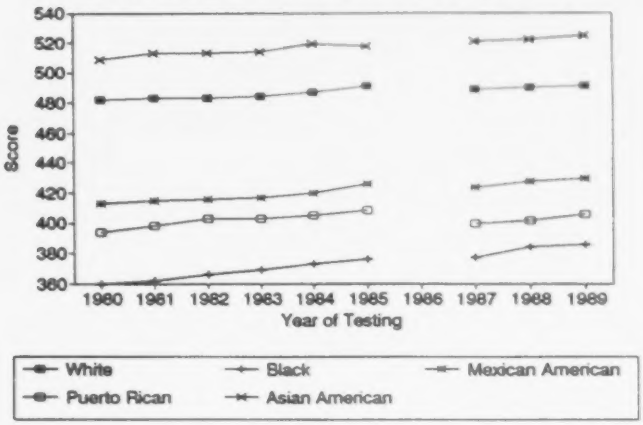
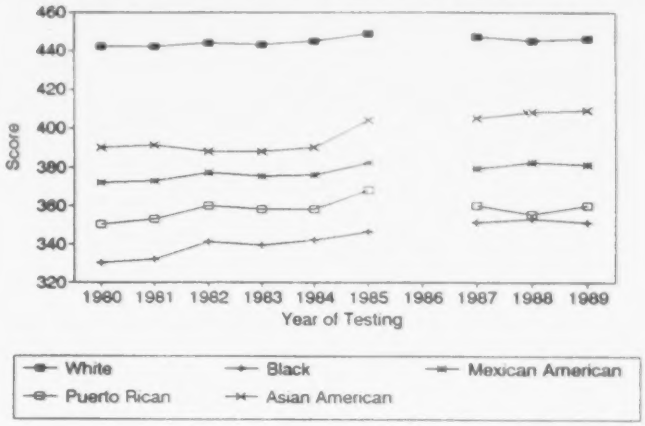


FIGURE 5.2

AVERAGE VERBAL SCORES BY RACE/ETHNIC GROUP: 1980 TO 1989

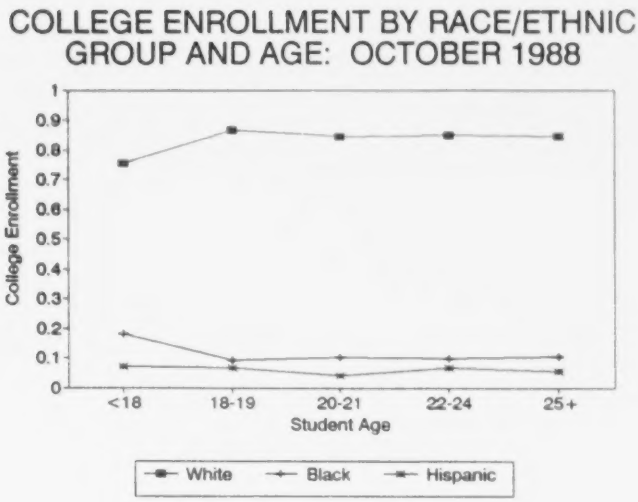


The "cutoff" scores used for college admissions are being raised due to the increased attention given to "excellence" and the raising of admissions standards. About one-third of state colleges recently surveyed expressed their intention to increase testing standards for admissions to technical fields and specialized courses.[2] The raising of standards to levels higher than those achieved by most Hispanic test-takers may limit Hispanic opportunities for entrance into institutions of higher learning.

C. Enrollment

The college enrollment gap between Whites and Hispanics remains large; college participation rates of Hispanic high school graduates declined steadily between 1976 and 1988 and have increased only slightly since 1988. Data from the 1988 Current Population Survey indicate that minorities in general have lower college enrollment rates than do White students, and Hispanic students have lower college enrollment rates than either White or Black students.[3] Figure 5.3 shows that Hispanic 18- to 19-year-olds comprise only 6.7% of total college enrollment, compared to 9.2% for Blacks and 86.6% for Whites. Hispanic females 18 to 19 years of age enroll at higher rates -- 7.6% -- than do Hispanic males their own age -- 5.6%. However, Hispanic males 20 years old and over have college enrollment rates higher than Hispanic females.

FIGURE 5.3



Hispanics who do go to college usually attend schools in Florida or the Southwest. Full- and part-time undergraduate student Hispanic enrollments are highly concentrated in institutions of higher education in Arizona, California, Florida, New Mexico, and Texas (See Figure 5.4).[4] In the fall of 1988, approximately 196,917 Hispanic students were enrolled in 226 California institutions, constituting 13.2% of California's total college enrollment. That same year Texas enrolled 115,888 Hispanics, constituting 16.1% of that state's total college enrollment.

FIGURE 5.4
FULL- AND PART-TIME UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION FALL 1988

AREA OR STATE	# OF INST'S	BLACK NON-HISP. NUMBER	%	HISPANIC NUMBER	%	WHITE NON-HISP. NUMBER	%	TOTAL
Nat'l Total	3,006	956,720	8.7	718,809	6.6	8,370,843	76.3	10,967,089
States,DC	2,952	956,679	8.8	588,739	5.4	8,370,530	77.4	10,821,320
Arizona	29	6,497	2.9	24,305	10.8	179,341	79.7	225,161
California	226	103,460	6.9	196,917	13.2	940,549	63.0	1,492,441
Colorado	46	4,335	2.6	11,603	7.1	130,959	79.9	163,889
Florida	75	40,765	9.3	47,068	10.7	328,843	75.0	438,502
Illinois	137	73,628	12.8	37,302	6.5	429,765	74.5	577,084
Michigan	89	43,302	9.6	6,290	1.4	373,398	83.1	449,405
New Jersey	58	24,853	9.9	15,370	6.1	183,186	72.9	251,353
New Mexico	26	1,550	2.3	18,615	27.1	42,571	62.0	68,612
New York	223	71,124	9.3	43,590	5.7	531,100	69.8	760,930
Texas	153	68,372	9.5	115,888	16.1	499,316	69.6	717,909
Outlying Areas	54	41	0.0	130,070	89.2	313	0.2	145,769
Puerto Rico	50	17	0.0	130,027	92.2	4	0.0	140,975

Sources: Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System from Tables provided by the Office for Civil Rights (U.S. Department of Education).

Hispanic enrollment in institutions of higher education by state is consistently well below the Hispanic proportion of the state's population. For example, Hispanics make up 24.3% of the California population, but only 13.2% of enrollment in institutions of higher education. In Texas, Hispanics are 25.8% of the population and 16.1% of enrollment; in New York, 11.2% of the population but just 5.7% of enrollment; in Arizona, 20.8% of the population and just 10.8% of enrollment. Of the five states with the largest Hispanic population, only in Florida -- where Hispanics comprise 12.7% of the population and make up 10.7% of enrollment -- does enrollment approach parity based on population.

Hispanic high school graduates continue to have lower rates of college enrollment than White high school graduates at all ages. Data from the 1988 Current Population Survey shown in Figure 5.5 suggest that only 52.9% of Hispanic 18- to 19-year-old high school graduates are enrolled in college, compared to 59.6% of White high school graduates of the same age group -- and the proportion goes down rapidly with age. By age 20-21, only about one-fourth of Hispanic high school graduates are enrolled in college; this reflects a high rate of Hispanic enrollment in two-year programs as well as a low rate of completion of four-year programs.

FIGURE 5.5
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ENROLLED IN COLLEGE
BY RACE/ETHNICITY, AGE AND SEX
OCTOBER 1988
(PERCENT)

	<18	18-19	20-21	22-24	25+
ALL STUDENTS	60.0	58.4	45.3	21.1	4.4
White	60.0	59.6	46.5	21.4	4.2
Black	54.1	45.5	34.0	15.8	5.0
Hispanic	54.2	52.9	26.8	20.6	5.6
MALE	50.4	57.2	46.0	23.9	3.8
White	51.0	58.9	48.2	24.2	3.6
Black	37.5	39.6	25.9	17.7	4.0
Hispanic	75.0	51.0	35.0	21.3	4.8
FEMALE	65.4	59.4	44.7	18.6	4.9
White	66.2	60.2	45.0	18.8	4.8
Black	58.7	50.1	40.5	14.2	5.7
Hispanic	36.4	54.2	18.3	19.8	6.5

Source: Current Population Survey, Series P-20, Number 443, October 1988.

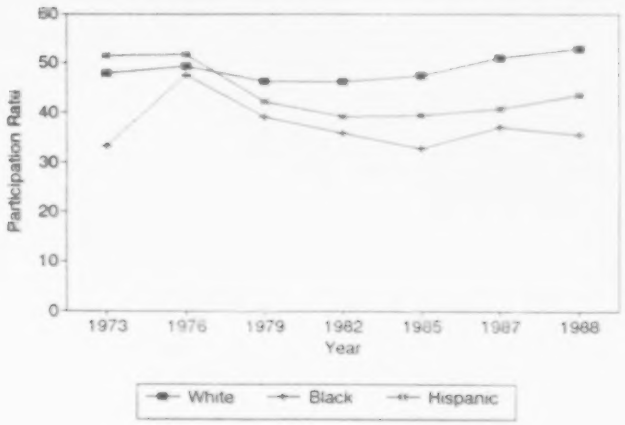
Hispanic females are more likely than males to enroll in college right after college, but by age 20-21 are less likely to be enrolled. Hispanic males frequently postpone college enrollment for two to three years after high school graduation. This phenomenon mirrors society on the whole; more females enroll in college directly out of high school, while their male counterparts more frequently postpone their college entrance.

Hispanic college enrollment has fluctuated over the past decade and a half but has declined overall. The percentage of minority high school graduates entering college hit a peak in 1976 and has never recovered. As shown in Figure 5.6, rates of Hispanic college participation have increased slightly in the past several years, but remain well below the highs of over 50% in 1973 and 1976.

Nationally, the rate of male enrollment in higher education declined early in the 1980s but has rebounded; improvements for Hispanic males have been much more modest than for Whites. Data from the National Center on Education Statistics indicate that overall, the proportion of males enrolling in college directly out of high school declined during the 1970s, then increased in the 1980s bringing such enrollment back up to its 1973 level, while Hispanic male enrollment remains well below the 1973 level.[5] Hispanic female enrollment shows a similar pattern, while 1988 enrollment for White women is well above the 1970s rates.

FIGURE 5.6

COLLEGE PARTICIPATION RATES FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADS: 1973 -- 1988



According to the American Council on Education, the gap in college access between White and minority students widened between 1986 and 1988[6]. There was a slight increase in the Hispanic male enrolled-in-college rate, from 29% in 1986 to 31.5% in 1988, while the Hispanic female enrolled-in-college rate remained stable at about 30%. ("Enrolled-in-college" is defined as the percentage of high school graduates who are actually enrolled in college in October of a given year). However, because college enrollments for Whites increased more rapidly, the gap increased during that period, as shown in Figure 5.6.[7]

College attendance by middle- as well as low-income Hispanic youth has declined over the past 14 years. A special analysis on the high school completion and college participation rates of low- and middle-income youth who were dependent family members, by the American Council on Education, found that the percentage of middle-income Hispanic

youth enrolled in college declined between 1976 and 1988. The proportion of 18- to 24-year-old low-income Hispanic high school graduates enrolled in college fell from 50.4% in 1976 to 35.3% in 1988. Moreover, while White middle-income youth experienced relative stability in their college enrollment during this period, the percentage of middle-income Hispanic high school graduates attending college declined from 53.4% in 1976 to 38.5% in 1987 and 46.4% in 1988.

D. Continuity of Enrollment

Research has shown that ongoing and full-time attendance in college are strongly associated with completion of a four-year degree, and Hispanics are less likely than Whites to be enrolled continuously.[8]. The National Center on Education Statistics has studied continuity in college enrollment from 1971 to 1986 -- the extent to which students remain continuously enrolled in college. Students who drop out or stop in their college attendance during their first two years are less likely to complete their college degree than those who remain enrolled consistently. This continuity is measured by the proportion of students enrolled in two consecutive Octobers. Hispanic and Black students are less likely than White students to be enrolled for two consecutive Octobers. However, continuity of enrollment rates for Hispanics have been fairly stagnant during this time period. There are many reasons why a student may leave college; major factors unrelated to the college experience include the need to work to support family and lack of financial resources to cover college costs.

E. Enrollment by Type of Institution

Hispanics are more heavily concentrated in two-year institutions than either Blacks or Whites; Hispanics are more than twice as likely to be enrolled in two-year than in four-year institutions. Significant trends relating to Hispanic participation in higher education are the propensity to attend two-year versus four-year, and public versus private institutions. In 1986, over 55% of Hispanics enrolled in higher education attended two-year institutions, compared to 37% of all college students.[9] According to the National Center on Education Statistics, in 1988 approximately 7.9% of all students enrolled in two-year colleges were Hispanic, while 3.6% of those enrolled in four-year institutions were Hispanics. About 5.8% of Hispanic college students were enrolled in public institutions, compared to 3.2% enrolled in private institutions.

F. Course Taking in Two-Year and Less-Than-Two-Year Institutions

Hispanics not only are concentrated in two-year institutions; they also tend to take more non-academic than academic courses, which severely limits their ability to transfer to four-year institutions. Whether students are earning credits in academic or

vocational courses while at two-year institutions is important to note because all too often it is the academic credits which are transferable to four-year institutions. It appears that Hispanic students "shop around" and take many courses in many different academic and vocational areas. This pattern of diverse course taking can prevent or delay the completion of any single course of study.

As shown in Figure 5.7, in the academic area more Hispanic students are heavily concentrated in social sciences, letters, and math. Approximately 51% of Hispanic students enrolled in two-year institutions take more math courses than Black students (41%) and slightly more than White students (49%). Hispanics also earn more credits in academic math courses (3.04) than Black (2.09) or White students (2.73). The extent to which these are remedial courses is not revealed by the survey data, but other studies have shown that Hispanics tend to be significantly overrepresented in remedial courses.

In the vocational area, Hispanics are highly concentrated in business, computers, home economics, and in health courses. Over 40% of Hispanic students take courses in business, and they earn more credits in business (4.40) than either Black (4.31) or White students (4.23).

Figures 5.7 and 5.8 show the percentage of Hispanic, Black and White two-year college students taking various types of academic and vocational courses.

FIGURE 5.7

ACADEMIC COURSES TAKEN IN TWO-YEAR AND LESS THAN TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

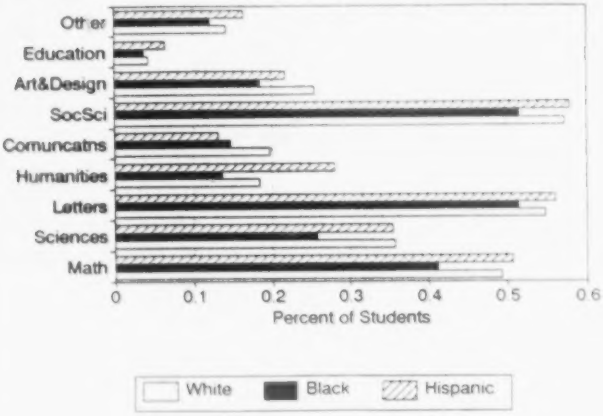
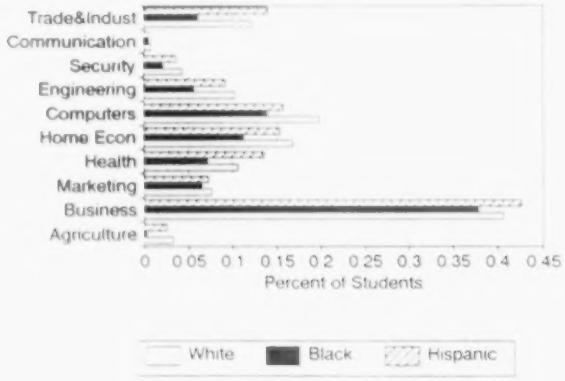


FIGURE 5.8

VOCATIONAL COURSES TAKEN IN TWO-YEAR AND LESS THAN TWO-YEAR COLLEGES



G. Degrees Conferred

Nearly one in ten young adults in the U.S. is Hispanic, but Hispanics receive less than three of every 100 Bachelor's degrees awarded each year by U.S. colleges and universities. As shown in Figure 5.9, in 1987 only 2.7% of all Bachelor's degrees were earned by Hispanics, who comprised 5.3% of the undergraduate population in 1986, compared to 2.3% in 1981. Hispanic students comprised about 3.2% of graduate school enrollment in 1986, yet they earned only 2.4% of all Master's and only 1.9% of Doctoral degrees awarded in 1987 (See Figure 5.10).[10] Between 1976 and 1987, the percent of Hispanic-earned Bachelor's degrees has not changed significantly. Gains have been made in the *number* of degrees awarded to Hispanics between 1976 and 1987. The American Council on Education attributes most of this gain to the increase in the number of women who have received degrees during this time period. Between 1976 and 1987 there was a 50.3% increase in the number of degrees awarded to Hispanics at the Bachelor's level; a 32.9% increase at the Master's level; a 90.1% increase at the first professional level; and a 25.6% increase at the Ph.D level in 1988.

FIGURE 5.9

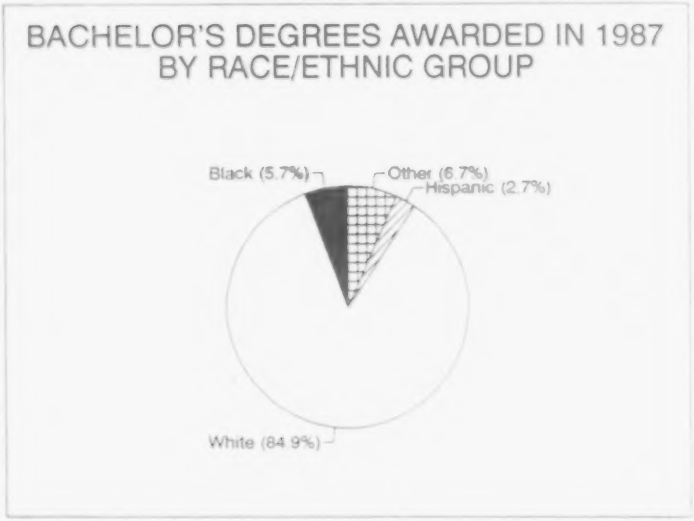


FIGURE 5.10
POSTSECONDARY DEGREES AWARDED BY U.S. COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, 1987 BY RACE/ETHNICITY (PERCENT)

RACE/ETHNICITY	PERCENT OF TOTAL DEGREES		
	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctoral
Black, non-Hispanic	5.7	4.8	2.3
Hispanic	2.7	2.4	1.9
White, non-Hispanic	84.9	79.1	61.2

Source: Minorities in Higher Education, 8th Annual Status Report, American Council on Education, December 1989.

In 1987, Bachelor's degrees were more commonly awarded in the fields of business, social science, and education overall, while degrees awarded to minority students were concentrated more heavily in business, social science, and engineering. About 63.8% of all doctorates earned by Hispanics were in education, social sciences, and humanities.

H. Financing a College Education

Hispanic students tend to rely more heavily on student loans to pay for their college education than either Blacks or Whites. Hispanics also tend to rely on self-support and parental support in financing college costs, although low family incomes make parental support difficult. College tuition costs have increased tremendously during the 1980s, while the availability of financial assistance has declined. The cost of attending postsecondary institutions rose 129% between 1979-80 and 1986-87. Financial assistance has shifted from grant aid to loans, work study aid, and an easing of income restrictions for student aid eligibility which allows more middle-income students to apply for aid.

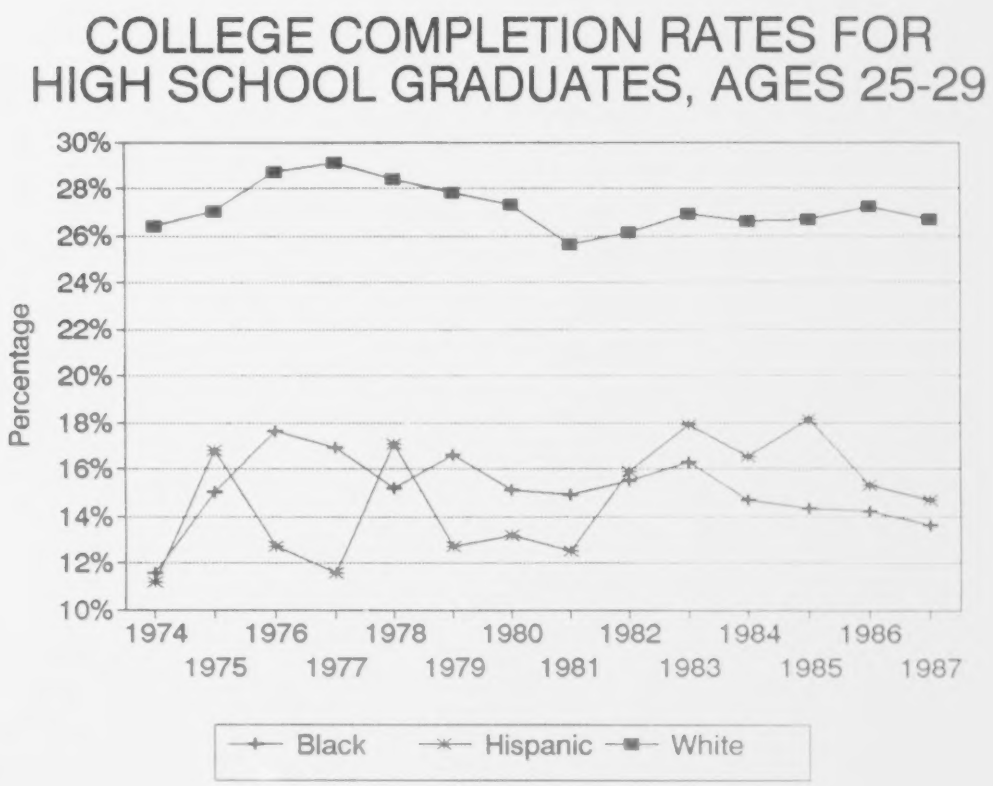
Hispanics are more dependent than Whites upon federal financial aid to help finance a college education due to low income levels, so they have been particularly hard-hit by cuts in federal aid. Pell Grants, for example, were designed to enable economically disadvantaged students to attend postsecondary institutions. In the mid- to late-1970s they accounted for about 80% of student funding.[11] Today Pell Grants account for only 15% of student funding.

Despite the fact that Hispanics are more than three times as likely to be poor than Whites, only about 40% of Hispanics received financial aid in 1986, compared to 55.7% of Blacks and 32.0% of Whites.[12] Approximately 40% of Hispanic students who graduate from college will find themselves in financial debt -- and for many Hispanics, a college education is out of reach due to economic factors.

I. College Completion

Hispanics are less likely than Whites or Blacks to complete high school; if they finish high school they are less likely to enroll in college; and if they enroll in college, they are less likely to obtain a degree. In 1987 the college completion rates of Hispanics and Blacks were 12 to 13 percentage points lower than the rate for Whites.[13] According to Census data, approximately 44.7% of Hispanic high school graduates 25-29 years old had completed one or more years of college in 1987, compared to 43.1% of Blacks and 50.9% of Whites. In addition, approximately 14.7% of Hispanic high school graduates 25-29 years old had completed four or more years of college in 1987, compared to 13.6% of Blacks and 26.7% of Whites (See Figure 5.11).

FIGURE 5.11



The gap between minorities and Whites in college completion rates remains large, and has not narrowed since the mid-1970s. As the figure indicates, Hispanic and Black college completion rates have fluctuated from just above 10% to about 18% over the past decade and a half, but have not shown sustained gains. College completion rates for young adult Whites have fluctuated far less, typically remaining in the 26-28% range.

CHAPTER 6. SNAPSHOT: ADULT/YOUNG ADULT HISPANICS

A. Introduction

Educational attainment levels of Hispanic adults and young adults continue to be much lower than those of non-Hispanics. In addition, illiteracy rates in the Hispanic community are substantially higher than for any other major population group.

The Hispanic population continues to grow rapidly, and this growth will be evident not only in the schools but also in the workforce. Hispanic children will constitute nearly one-third of the nation's public school enrollment by the year 2000, and Hispanics will constitute nearly one-third of labor force growth between now and the end of the century. Low educational attainment and high English illiteracy rates limit the ability of Hispanic parents to help their children learn to read or otherwise assist in their children's education. Illiteracy is also a barrier to improved employment opportunities for Hispanics. Therefore, the educational and literacy levels of the Hispanic young adult and adult population are important to employers and policy makers as well as to the Hispanic community.

The definition of "adult" and "young adult" vary from survey to survey; therefore, the terms used in this chapter reflect the source of data used and age groupings may not be comparable across different studies.

B. Educational Attainment

1. By Race/Ethnicity and Hispanic Subgroup

Hispanics have made progress in educational attainment since 1970, but the gap between Hispanics and non-Hispanics has continued to widen. Data from the March 1989 Current Population Survey (CPS) show that only 51% of Hispanics 25 years old and over have completed four years or more of high school, compared to 79% of non-Hispanics (See Figure 6.1).[1] Figure 6.2 shows that only 10% of Hispanics 25 years old and over have completed four or more years of college, compared to 22% of non-Hispanics.

Approximately three-fifths (60%) of young Hispanics (25 to 34 years old) have now completed four years of high school or more, compared to nearly nine-tenths (89%) of non-Hispanics, according to the CPS. Only about one-tenth (11%) of Hispanic young adults have completed four or more years of college, compared more than one-fourth (26%) of non-Hispanic young adults. Less than half of Hispanics 35 years old and over (45%) have completed four or more years of high school, compared to three-fourths (75%) of non-Hispanics.

FIGURE 6.1

HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION RATES
FOR PERSONS 25 YEARS AND OLDER

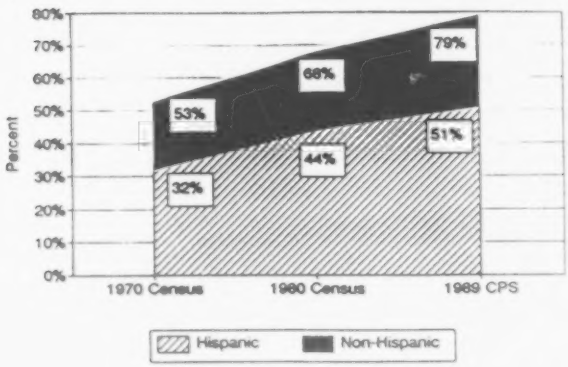
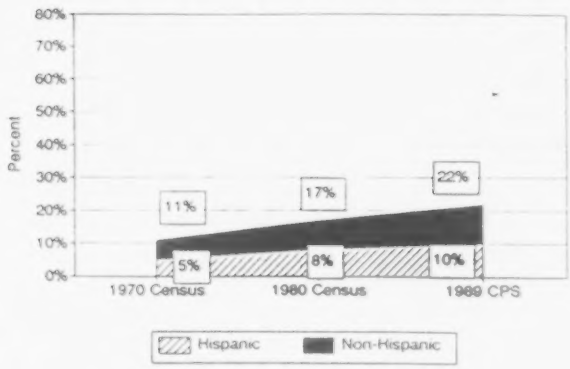


FIGURE 6.2

COLLEGE COMPLETION RATES
FOR PERSONS 25 YEARS AND OLDER



Of all Hispanic subgroups, Mexican Americans have the lowest levels of educational attainment, and Cubans the highest. Only 50% of the young adult Mexican American population has completed four or more years of high school, compared to 70% of Central and South Americans, 76% of Puerto Ricans, 84% of Cubans, and 77% of Other Hispanics. About 38% of all adult Mexican Americans have completed four or more years of high school, compared to 42% of Puerto Ricans, 58% of Cubans, 63% of Central and South Americans, and 56% of Other Hispanics. College completion rates for Mexican Americans are extremely low. Only 6.1% of young adult -- and 6.2% of all adult -- Mexican Americans have completed four or more years of college. A substantially higher proportion of the young adult Central and South American population (22%) have completed four or more years of college (See Figures 6.3 and 6.4).

FIGURE 6.3

HISPANICS WHO COMPLETED FOUR OR MORE
YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL: MARCH 1989

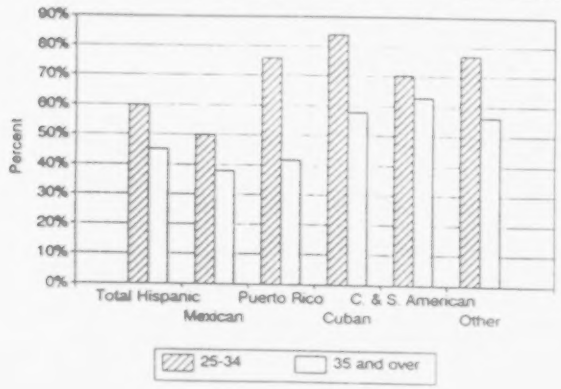
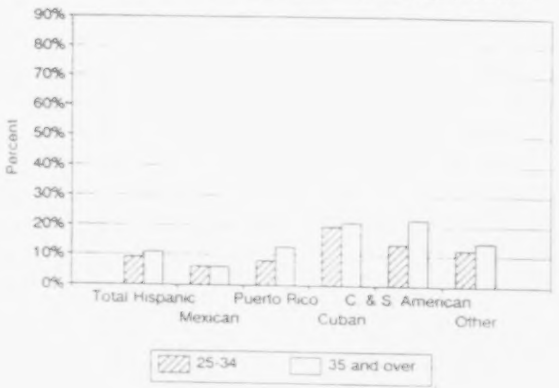


FIGURE 6.4

HISPANICS WHO COMPLETED FOUR OR MORE
YEARS OF COLLEGE: MARCH 1989



2. By State

State-level data reflect national figures on Hispanic educational attainment. Overall, Hispanics 25 years old and over have lower educational attainment levels than their Black or White counterparts, and this holds true in most states with large Hispanic populations. For example, only 49.1% of Hispanics in California have completed four years of high school or more, compared to 80.0% of Blacks and 78.4% of Whites. Only 5.6% of California Hispanics have completed four or more years of college, compared to 13.4% of Blacks and 23.3% of Whites (See Figure 6.5). In New York, only 51.4% of Hispanics have completed four years of high school or more, compared to 64.1% of Blacks and 76.4% of Whites. Only 43.1% of Hispanics in Texas have completed four years of high school or more, compared to 68.7% of Blacks and 72.0% of Whites; 7.5% have completed four years of college or more, compared to 11.1% of Blacks and 20.4% of Whites.

C. Literacy Rates

Illiteracy among the adult and young adult Hispanic population is extremely high. Regardless of the measure used, Hispanics consistently have higher rates of illiteracy than other major population groups. Approximately 56% of the adult Hispanic population are considered to be functionally illiterate.[2] Illiteracy among the Hispanic subgroups is also high.

Depending on the measure used, more than half of Hispanic adults may be considered functionally illiterate. By the traditional measure of literacy --the completion of less than five years of schooling -- about 11.9% of Hispanics 25 years of age and older could be considered illiterate, compared to 1.8% of the total non-Hispanic population in 1987[3] (See Figure 6.6).

Other national surveys using functional literacy criteria rather than years of schooling have found much higher rates of illiteracy in the Hispanic community. The 1975 Adult Performance Level Study, which developed a standard of functional illiteracy, found that 56% of Hispanic adults could be considered functionally illiterate in English, compared to 44% of Blacks and 16% of Whites (See Figures 6.7 and 6.8).[4]

According to one study using a different measure, the illiteracy rate for Mexican Americans is much higher (18.5%) than for other subgroups. Puerto Ricans have a illiteracy rate of 13.4%, compared to Cubans (7.8%) and other Latinos (8.2%).[5]

FIGURE 6.5
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN SELECTED STATES BY RACE/ETHNICITY, MARCH 1986 AND 1987

	Total Persons (Thousands)	% Completing High School or More	% Completing 4 Years of College or More
CALIFORNIA			
Total, 25 and older	16,781	78.9	23.5
White	14,220	78.4	23.3
Black	1,093	80.0	13.4
Hispanic Origin*	3,021	49.1	5.6
FLORIDA			
Total, 25 and older	7,727	77.1	19.7
White	6,712	79.8	21.1
Black	957	59.4	9.1
Hispanic Origin*	774	61.2	16.4
ILLINOIS			
Total, 25 and over	7,124	76.4	20.2
White	6,060	77.7	20.7
Black	912	66.2	10.9
Hispanic Origin*	314	48.4	11.5
MASSACHUSETTS			
Total, 25 and older	3,699	80.4	26.5
White	3,513	80.7	26.5
Black	132	77.3	21.2
Hispanic Origin*	80	52.5	11.3
NEW JERSEY			
Total, 25 and older	4,884	76.9	23.3
White	4,231	78.1	24.2
Black	521	63.3	6.7
Hispanic Origin*	385	57.7	12.2
NEW YORK			
Total, 25 and older	11,255	75.0	23.2
White	9,460	76.4	23.8
Black	1,347	64.1	13.1
Hispanic Origin*	1,141	51.4	8.5
TEXAS			
Total, 25 and older	9,816	72.0	19.8
White	8,577	72.0	20.4
Black	1,060	68.7	11.1
Hispanic Origin*	2,065	43.1	7.5

* Hispanics may be of any race.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Report, Series P-20, No. 428, "Educational Attainment in the United States: March 1987 and 1986."

FIGURE 6.6

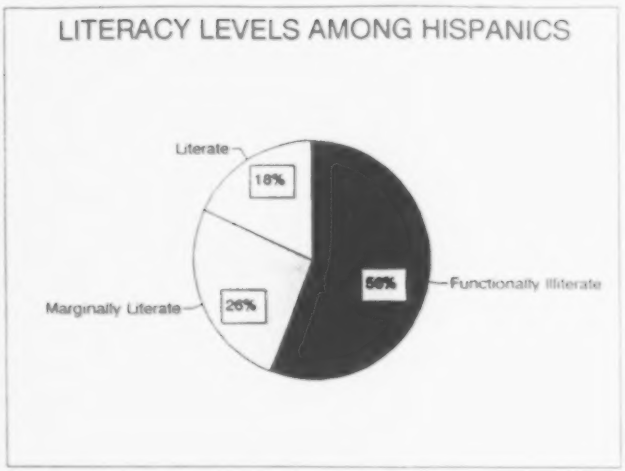
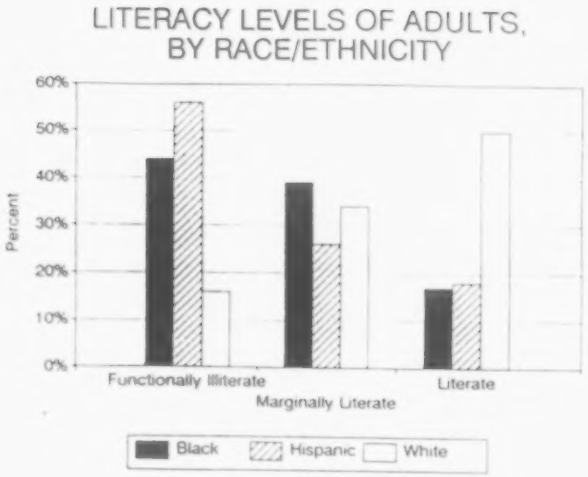
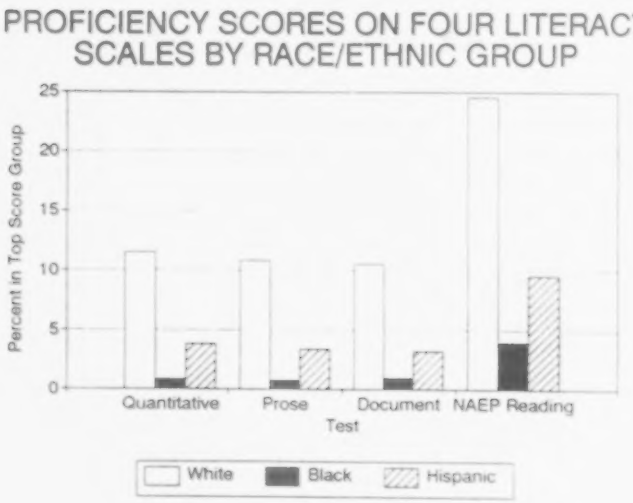


FIGURE 6.7



In 1985, the NAEP Young Adult Literacy Survey reviewed literacy among the nation's young adult population 21 to 25 years of age, basing its assessment on three scales -- prose literacy, document literacy, and quantitative literacy (See Figure 6.8)[6] About 95% of The young adult population was found to possess rudimentary skills in reading and writing. However, few young adults possessed the advanced skills needed to complete tasks requiring analysis, information processing, and multiple mathematical operations. As shown in the figure, based on the NAEP Adult Literacy scales, Hispanics have a higher rate of illiteracy than Whites or Blacks, and a slightly higher rate of full literacy than Blacks. Whites are about three times more likely than Hispanics, and about 10 times more likely than Blacks, to score in the highest category on each of these four scales.

FIGURE 6.8



While only a small percentage of Hispanics attend less than five years of school, the data make it clear that a very large proportion of Hispanics lack the reading, writing, and computational skills needed for full participation in the nation's economic mainstream.

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